Jihad al-Akbar

, The Greatest Jihad Combat with the Self

Imam Khomeini

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

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The internal struggle. Recommendations for religious students and seminaries. Importance of purifying the soul. Knowledge and faith. Includes advice on how to benefit from the blessed month of Ramadhan and the fasting and devotion therein.

Foreword

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Human being is the most wonderful and complex creation of God, a creature who, aside from natural and animal instincts and physical reactions, has spiritual disposition and personality, which has made him excel over other living creatures; a being who thinks, chooses, and through rational planning and physical endeavor, he tries to remove the obstacles along the pursuit for a better living.

Along with this venture, he makes his life's history and increases the learning which he has inherited from his predecessors and he paves the way for the future generation to have a more rapid development, more extended dominance over the nature, and further ingenuity in unraveling the unknown and mysteries of creation.

Yet, it is lamentable to note that amidst man's endeavors to attain his desires and

yearnings, and the hullabaloo of man’s encounter with the nature, an ever more precious truth has been consigned in the limbo of oblivion. That truth is the spirit and essence of man’s personality. In other words, it is the “man’s primordial self”, self-refinement

and purification, and nurturing an exalted man—the man to whom God has bestowed .a superior station over all creatures

In understanding this truth, the true and authorized exegetes and expounders of the ”.revelation say, “He who knows himself knows his Lord

Yes, negligence of the self, overlooking the infinite aspects of man’s spirit, and inattentiveness with respect to man’s ingenuities in traversing the path of perfections and moral excellences are maladies with which most of the human societies have been afflicted. Technological ascendancy and mechanical living as well as hegemony .of the materialists and mammonists over the extensive regions of the world

On one hand, and the inability of divergent schools and thoughts in presenting a clear direction and exact explanation of man, on the other hand, have exacerbated retrogression and self-alienation. In the midst of this, only the forerunners of monotheism, the prophets and vanguards of the sanctities of values and spiritualities .can mould man in the form of their incessant struggle

And in consonance with the light of reason and the call of natural disposition they have guided human society towards perfection and lofty values. Indeed, the source of pride, great values and true civilizations in the history of mankind, are the outcome of .such struggle

The Islamic Revolution which, to the astonishment of the world, has occurred in the contemporary period through the effort and aspiration of one of the men of God, was in essence not only a political movement or a populist uprising in a bid to overthrow

a despotic rule but more than that, it is a moral and cultural revivification that summons the contemporary weak and feeble man to regain his divide natural .disposition

The founder of the Islamic Republic, in his abiding last will and testament under the :importance of the great revolution, which he has initiated, said

In the world the extent of one's toils, sufferings and acts of self- sacrifice and self-" abnegation is commensurate with the loftiness and worthwhile sublimity of his goal. What you rose for, what you pursue, what you sacrifice your lives and your means for .is the noblest of all goals since the creation of the universe till eternity

It is the divine ideology in the broadest sense of the word and the idea of the unity of God in its lofty magnitude, which is the foundation and final goal of the earthly world and of the Unseen and which idea is fully crystallized in the Muhammadan school, peace and blessings of God be upon him and his progeny, and for the realization of .which all the leading prophets and holy saints, peace be upon them all, worked hard

It is something without which man will not attain absolute perfection or find reunion with the Absolute and the Infinite Beauty of His Divinity. It is this very same thing which has exalted earthlings beyond the rank of those in the celestial world, and the journey to that very destination by an earthling has a consequence solely to him and not to

".any of His other creatures, visible or invisible

In the logic of Imam Khomeini, struggle, involvement in politics and taking over the government is not the objective. The objective is the victory of getting out from the conflict about which God, after successive oaths, says:

"(۱) Indeed he who purified it succeeded! And indeed he who polluted it failed!"(

That is, the aim is the refinement of man and guiding him from the mundane to the celestial world. The aim is the establishment and creation of a society and environment wherein only God is worshipped, and the beacons of servitude, sincerity and manifestation of faith in the unseen would dispel the darkness of carnal desires and worldly passion.

Let the eyes of humanity see the shining splendor of truth, and make monotheism and its sublime dimensions govern the entire human relations and interactions. All of these are not possible except through self-purification, a subject which is unknown to the leaders of both the East and the West and for which the weary world of today is thirsty.

The secret behind the greatness of Imam Khomeini's works and the wonder of the influence of His Eminence's pen and thought on his followers should be studied within the framework of this very truth.

Those who are looking for the secret behind the slogan of blood's victory over the sword and the triumph of the armless votaries of the Imam against the most militarily equipped American surrogate government would lead to nowhere they as are looking for political

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۱- Surah ash-Shams [Chapter: The Sun] ۹۱:۹-۱۰ of the Glorious Qur'an.

.and economic factors in the context of materialistic analyses

Those who have not heard of, and do not understand, the success of Imam Khomeini in the experience and training in the different forms of struggles against the self and the tussle in the intricate realm of the greatest jihad (jihad al-akbar), could not also .comprehend the quintessence of the Imam's revolution

The Greatest Jihad: Combat with the Self is the title of the present book and a valuable mystical work which he himself practically traversed for years through spiritual journey, worship and cognition of such perilous route. Before apparently .entering the world of political resistance as well as in the midst of his struggles

Imam Khomeini (r), while relying on discussions such as this, used to teach the wayfarers in his path that his course is distinct from the conventional political movements and professional statesmen, and that the real victory in the political, military and economic struggles is in no way attainable except through the greatest .struggle and combat with the self

The topics of this book are a transcription of the discourses of Imam Khomeini in Najaf al-Ashraf, which he delivered at the threshold of the blessed month of Ramadan and other days in the Islamic theological center,(۱) and through the initiatives of the Imam's followers, are compiled and published many times before the .victory of the Islamic Revolution both in Iran and abroad

The painful warnings and moral admonitions of Imam Khomeini during those days of hurdle and vicissitude used to

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It should be noted that the subjects of the book, The Greatest Jihad, are excerpts -۱ of Imam Khomeini's lectures and admonitions in the different levels of Islamic theology during the days of his residence in Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq (۱۹۶۴-۱۹۷۸), which has been transcribed and compiled by Hujjat al-Islam wal-Muslimin Sayyid Hamid .Ruhani

arouse zeal of faith and divine motivations to the devoted students and seminarians, separate the course of the movement from the path of those who are alien to self-purification, and sow the seed of sincerity and faith in the hearts of truth-seekers

A seed, which through the divine assistance has finally brought fruit, and the people of the world had witnessed scenes of its miracle during the days of fire and blood, the confrontation between hand fist and weapon in ۱۳۵۷ AHS (۱۹۷۹) as well as the subsequent predominance of the faithful youth in traversing the path of martyrdom and manifestations of indescribable moments of the basijis' (mobilization forces') .resistance and fervent prayers in the warfronts

Now, in commemoration of the thirteenth death anniversary (June ۴, ۲۰۰۲) of that pious servant of God, we are pleased to present this enduring literary work with explanatory notes as well as selected quotations from the book and Munajat of the Month of Sha'ban as appendices, to his admirers, enthusiasts and adherents of his .sublime and transcendent path

The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works

Second Publication, June ۲۰۰۲

Preface

The ordinary man normally has a one-dimensional personality, but great people who are truly liberated, such as the prophets and friends of Allah have personalities of several aspects. Sometimes it is difficult or even impossible for an ordinary person's intellect to grasp how these various dimensions can be encompassed in the existence .of such great people

As an outstanding religious figure, Imam Khomeini may be

included among such great personalities. In addition to his leadership abilities, political insight and far sightedness, he now also may be considered to be a distinguished .teacher of Islamic ethics

For various reasons, this aspect of his personality has not become very well known. The book which is before you is composed of some of his lectures on morals, which were delivered prior to the victory of the Islamic Revolution during the period of his exile in Najaf. He invites all, and especially the students of divinity, to refinement of .the soul, asceticism and piety

Since English speaking Muslims have expressed interest in studying this work, the Islamic Thought Foundation has undertaken its publication, and Dr. Muhammad Legenhausen has accepted the responsibility for its translation. Prior to this, another .of Imam Khomeini's works, A Jug of Love, was also published by this Foundation

It is worthy of mention that the Islamic Thought Foundation is a charitable organization which is independently funded and administered for the purpose of .printing and publishing beneficial works in various languages

Accordingly, more than sixty works by outstanding Islamic figures have been published thus far. We pray that God may grant our dear readers with the success of .benefiting as much as possible from the contents of this work

Islamic Thought Foundation

First Publication, ۱۹۹۵

Introduction

In New York City on West Broadway there is a bookstore affiliated with a Turkish Sufi order. In the summer of ۱۹۹۳, I purchased a few books there, and one of the other

customers, a black man wearing a small white cap began talking with me. After exchanging Salams, and after I told him that I was working in Iran, he asked me .whether I had ever seen a book by Imam Khomeini called Jihad al-Akbar

I told him that although I was not familiar with the work, I thought that it had been translated by Hamid Algar, and included in his collection of translations of Imam's speeches, Islam and Revolution (Mizan Press). He was not familiar with that work, but insisted that the Muslims in America had a real need for translations of Imam's works, .and he was particularly interested in Jihad al-Akbar

When I went home, I found that a couple pages of the speeches of Imam which were given in Najaf and later collected under the title Jihad al-Akbar had been translated by Prof. Algar. The following autumn, when I returned to Iran, I found the Jihad al-Akbar had recently published as a small booklet. Remembering the American Muslim I met in .the Sufi Bookstore, I decided to make a complete translation of it

Since I lacked the competence in Farsi for such an undertaking, I solicited the assistance of 'Azim Sarvdalir, with whom I was studying Farsi and doing other translations at Bunyad Baqir al-'Ulum in Qum. Mr. Sarvdalir was happy to take up the project, which, with the encouragement of the Bunyad, was completed the following !June; Al-hamdulillah

.This is a work in morals, in Farsi and Arabic, akhlaq

It is not a philosophical work, but a moral exhortation directed toward the seminary students of Najaf, and toward the institution of the seminary, or hawzah 'ilmiyyah, as well. The work reveals the moral sensitivity of Imam Khomeini, his paternal anxiety .regarding the seminarians and his dedication to the institution of the seminary

Upon reading this work one will discover that along the revolutionary fervor and condemnation of foreign imperialism there can be found a mystic's taste for spiritual devotions. The waters of 'irfan (gnosis) run deep in the thought of Imam Khomeini and nourish his moral outlook. This work is a testimony to the truth of Shahid Mutahhari's(۱) remark that 'irfan and ethics are both concerned with the .improvement of character, but from different perspectives

In ethical works one finds a description of virtues and vices and moral prescriptions and proscriptions, while in 'irfani works one finds a description of a process through which the soul moves toward Allah and acquires virtues corresponding to the divine .attributes along the way

The way of moral reform advocated by Imam Khomeini is a process of spiritual development in which the adept learns to conquer and then lose interest in his worldly desires and become totally devoted to God. This process is described as a journey toward Allah, a journey which holds a central place in 'irfan, which may be considered .the kernel of Islam

This journey is described in different ways and from a variety of viewpoints in the poetry of

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۱ - Professor Ayatullah Murtada Mutahhari (۱۲۹۸-۱۳۵۸ AHS) was born on Bahman ۱۳, ۱۲۹۸ AHS in the village of Fariman near Mashhad to a family of clergy. At the age of ۱۲, he went to Mashhad where he learned the basics of Islamic sciences and then moved to Qum where he attended the class sessions conducted by the great authorities of the theological center. From ۱۳۱۹ AHS Mutahhari had taken part in the sessions led by His Eminence Imam Khomeini (r) and other famous teachers of the time. Moreover,

he himself conducted lessons in subjects like Arabic literature, logic, kalam (scholasticism), jurisprudence, and philosophy. In ١٣٣١ AHS Mutahhari was transferred from Qum to Tehran and in ١٣٣٤ AHS he was invited to teach Islamic sciences at the Faculty of Islamic Sciences, Tehran University. He was arrested at the midnight of Khordad ١٥, ١٣٤٢ AHS and spent ٤٣ days in prison. After Imam Khomeini's migration to Paris in France, Mutahhari went to meet him and His Eminence assigned him the responsibility of organizing the Council of the Islamic Revolution. On the night of Ordibehesht ١١, ١٣٥٨ AHS [May ٢, ١٩٧٩] Mutahhari was martyred by an agent of the Furqan terrorist group. He wrote more than ٥٠ books and tens of articles, and delivered scores of speeches. His Eminence Imam Khomeini (r) said of Mutahhari: "His written and spoken words are, without exception, educational and enlivening… I recommend the students and intellectual group not to let Mutahhari's words be forgotten by un-Islamic tricks…" (Pub.)

the Sufis, in the transcendent philosophy of Mulla Sadra, (۱) and in the poetry and teachings of Imam Khomeini, as well.

Although the present work consists of speeches delivered to the students at Najaf, the moral advice given is particularly pertinent for all Muslims in the contemporary situation of discord and confusion. Imam Khomeini advises the seminarians to abandon their quarrelling, which only serve as an opportunity for mischief on the part of the enemies of Islam.

In the Islamic world today, we also observe that the opponents of the Islamic movement take advantage of disputes among Muslims. Imam reminds the students that they do not possess sufficient wealth and power to make these things worth fighting over even according to the standards of materialism.

Parallel remarks are appropriate for the Muslim world as a whole, given the poverty and powerlessness which characterized the vast masses of the Islamic ummah. Imam sanctions the students that they should take heed of the fact that the major purpose of the prophets and the Imams has been spiritual progress and moral improvement, and that the students must not content themselves with learning a few terms of Islamic jurisprudence.

The same warning should be heeded by contemporary Muslims. We must not content ourselves with a handful of slogans and the performance of a few rituals, but must take steps for spiritual and moral growth. Not merely in the seminary of Najaf, but wherever and to whom ever Islam is taught, this teaching must not confine

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۱- Mulla Sadra (d. ۱۰۵۰ AH/۱۶۴۰), also called Sadr ad-Din Shirazi, was a philosopher who led the Iranian cultural renaissance in the ۱۷th century. The foremost representative of Ishraqi [Illuminationist] School of philosopher-mystics, he is commonly regarded by Iranians as the greatest philosopher of Iran. A scion of a notable Shirazi family, Mulla Sadra completed his education in Isfahan, then the leading cultural and intellectual center of Iran. After his studies with scholars there, he produced several works, the

most famous of which was his Asfar (Journeys). Asfar contains the bulk of his philosophy, which was influenced by a personal mysticism bordering on the ascetic that he experienced during a ١٥-year retreat at Kahak, a village near Qum in Iran. Toward the end of his life, Mulla Sadra returned to Shiraz to teach. His teachings, however, were considered heretical by the orthodox Shi'ite theologians, who persecuted him, though his powerful family connections permitted him to continue to (.write. He died on a pilgrimage to Mecca. (Pub

itself to a rehearsal of basic beliefs and necessary practices, but must be accompanied by the moral and spiritual teachings which were the primary focus of .the prophets and the Imams, peace be upon them all

The present work may be read in order to gain insight into the thought of the founder of the Islamic Revolution of Iran. It may be read in order to become familiar with the sort of problems which existed in Najaf at the time the lectures were delivered. It can be read as an example of the type of moral preaching which could be expected from .among the best of Shi'ite moral teachers of this age

It is a work which can be read in order to learn something about history, sociology or anthropology, and in all of these areas valuable lessons are to be learned. But more important than any of these is the moral lessons to be drawn for the Islamic community in general. Let us not content ourselves with ritual duties while ignoring .the need for moral reform

Let us appoint moral guides in all of our Islamic educational institutions, so that Islamic education may become more truly a training in submission to Allah, and let us draw upon the example as well as the teachings of the prophets and the Imams so that we may learn to seek to commence the journey of the believer toward Allah, !insha Allah

The remainder of this introduction consists of a few biographical remarks with particular

.reference to the moral and spiritual training of Imam Khomeini, may he rest in peace

Ruhullah Musawi Khomeini, was born in ۱۹۰۲ in the town of Khomein, which is about half way between Tehran and the southwestern city of Ahwaz. Ruhullah's father and grandfather were religious scholars in Khomein. His father, Ayatullah Mustafa, is said to have been murdered by bandits when Ruhullah was less than six months old. His mother, Hajar, was the daughter of the religious scholar Aqa Mirza Ahmad Mujtahid .Khansari

The boy was raised by his mother and an aunt, both of whom died of cholera when he was six. His education was then supervised by his older brother, Ayatullah Pasandideh. At nineteen, Ruhullah traveled northwest from Khomein to the city of Arak, where he became a student of Shaykh 'Abd al-Karim Ha'eri, a leading religious .scholar of his day

The following year, Shaykh Ha'eri and his student Ruhullah moved to Qum, where the Shaykh reorganized and revitalized the entire institution of religious education in that city, which was already famous as a center of learning. Ruhullah studied in Qum until the death of Shaykh Ha'eri, in ۱۹۳۶ after which he began teaching theology, ethics, .philosophy, and mysticism

It was during his first fourteen years in Qum that Ayatullah Khomeini became familiar with the intertwined traditions of philosophy and mysticism which flourished during Iran's Safawid period (۱۶th and ۱۷th centuries) and which continue to exert an .enormous influence on contemporary Shi'ite thought

When he arrived in Qum, Imam Khomeini

began to receive private instruction in ethics with Haj Mirza Jawad Maleki Tabrizi, the author of a book entitled, The Secrets of Prayer (Asrar as-Salat), Imam Khomeini also wrote a book on this topic, called The Secret of Prayer: Prayers of the Gnostics or Ascension of the Wayfarers (Sirr as-Salat: Salat al-'Arifin ya Mi'raj as-Salikin). His .instruction under Mirza Jawad continued until the death of the teacher, in ۱۹۲۵

Imam Khomeini also studied the mystic traditions from Haj Mirza Abu'l-Hasan Rafi'i Qazvini, who was in Qum from ۱۹۲۳ to ۱۹۲۷. Qazvini is known for his commentary on a supplication which is recited daily in the pre-dawn hours during the month of .Ramadan. Later, Imam Khomeini would also write a commentary on this prayer

Finally, and perhaps most importantly among his spiritual guides, there was Aqa Mirza Muhammad 'Ali Shahabadi, the author of Spray from the Seas (Rashahat al-Bahar), who was in Qum from ۱۹۲۸ to ۱۹۳۵. In the mystic tradition of which Shahabadi was a part, the phrase 'spray from the sea' may be taken as a symbol for inspiration from .God

It was with Shahabadi that Imam Khomeini is reported to have studied the Fusus al-Hikam [Bezels of Wisdom] of Ibn al-'Arabi (۱) (d. ۱۲۴۰) and the important commentary .(on that work by Qaysari (d. ۱۳۵۰

In ۱۹۲۹, Imam Khomeini married, and a year later his first son, Mustafa, was born. Over the course of the years, two other sons and four daughters were born. Mustafa would grow up to be

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Muhyi ad-Din ibn al-'Arabi, the celebrated Muslim mystic whose influence came to -۱ permeate the intellectual and spiritual life of virtually the entire Muslim world, was born at Murcia in Southern Spain in ۱۱۶۵. Much of his youth was spent in Seville, where he devoted himself to literary, theological and mystical studies. After visiting Granada and other Spanish towns, as well as Tunis, Fez, and Morocco, he set out in ۱۲۰۲ for the East by way of Egypt, whence he made the pilgrimage to Mecca. He did not return to Spain. Many of the remaining years of his life were passed in the neighborhood of

Mecca, but he also traveled extensively to Babylonia, Asia Minor, and Syria, everywhere gaining disciples and spreading his doctrines through dialogues with scientists and scholars. Whether we regard the extent of his theological writings or their influence on the subsequent development of Islamic mysticism, Ibn al-'Arabi can justly claim the supreme position among Sufi authors which posterity has accorded him, and which is attested by the title, Ash-Shaykh al-Akbar, conferred on him by the almost unanimous voice of those who are best qualified to judge. The list of his works drawn up by himself contains ٢٨٩ titles, and some of them are of enormous length. The most famous and important is the Futuhat al-Makkiyah. In this, as in many of his works, Ibn al-'Arabi professes to communicate mysteries revealed to him in ecstatic vision by prophets, angels, and even God Himself. (Pub.)

killed in Iraq by agents of the Shah. The youngest son Sayyid Ahmad, would become a .secretary to his father, and afterward, a political leader in his own right

Recalling his years as a student in Qum, Imam Khomeini himself has publicly commented on the hostility toward mysticism and philosophy which was to be found in certain quarters in Qum, feelings which are still harbored by some members of the clergy. The story is often repeated that when Imam had begun teaching philosophy in .Qum and his first son was a small child

Some seminarians felt it necessary to perform a ritual cleansing of a cup from which the child had drunk water because of his impurity as the son of a teacher of philosophy! Imam reports that his teacher, Shahabadi, sought to oppose this hostility by making people familiar with the doctrines of the mystics so they could see for .themselves that there was nothing inimical to Islam in the teachings of the Gnostics

Once a group of merchants came to see the late Shahabadi (may God have mercy on him), and he began to speak to them on the same mystical topics that he taught to everyone. I asked him whether

it was appropriate to speak to them of such matters and he replied: "Let them be exposed just once to these heretical teachings! I too now find it incorrect to divide people into categories and pronounce some incapable of understanding these ".matters

One of the most dramatic efforts of Imam Khomeini to

bring mysticism to the people occurred after the Islamic Revolution with his Lectures on Surah al-Fatihah from which the above report has been quoted. After the Revolution, there were televised lessons on the interpretation of the Qur’an by (Ayatullah Taleqani.(١

When Ayatullah Taleqani died on September ١٠, ١٩٧٩, about a half year after the victory of the revolution, the televised commentary on the Qur’an was taken up by a younger scholar. Imam Khomeini suggested that a more senior authority might be sought for the program. After consulting among themselves, those responsible for the .broadcast decided to request that Imam himself provide the commentary

Imam responded that if the cameras could be brought to his residence he would comply with the request. The result was the Lectures on Surah al-Fatihah, a stunning mystical interpretation of the opening verses of the Qur’an, in which one of the .dominant themes was the claim that the whole world is a name of God

In these lectures Imam also contends that the philosophers of Islam, the mystics and the poets have used different terminologies to express the same insights, and he urges his viewers not to reject what is taught by members of these groups until they understand what is being expressed, even if

the language used raises suspicions of heterodoxy. Thus, Imam’s preaching in this .area was very much a plea for tolerance

Imam Khomeini’s emphasis on tolerance was not limited to mysticism and poetry. Imam Khomeini’s teacher in Islamic jurisprudence, Shaykh Ha’eri, was succeeded in Qum

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Ayatullah Sayyid Mahmud Taleqani (١٢٨٩-١٣٥٨ AHS / ١٩١٠-١٩٧٩) was a highly learned -١ and dedicated clergyman who played a pivotal role the struggle against dictatorial regime of the Shah. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatullah Taleqani was appointed as the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and was an elected member

of the Council of Experts. In Mordad ۱۳۵۸ AHS [August ۱۹۷۹], Imam Khomeini designated him as his representative to lead the first Friday congregational prayers at the Tehran University campus. Ayatullah Taleqani had many written works on the exegesis of the Qur'an, Islamic education, and socio-political issues. (Pub.)

by Ayatullah Burujerdi, who came to be recognized as the supreme authority on the subject. After the death of Ayatullah Burujerdi, in ۱۹۶۱, Imam Khomeini came to be recognized as one of several supreme experts in Islamic jurisprudence, a marja'-e .taqlid

In this role, Imam Khomeini issued a number of decrees which were looked upon with suspicion by more conservative clerics. Many of the religious scholars in both Sunni and Shi'ite legal schools have ruled that music and chess are forbidden activities. Imam Khomeini ruled that some forms of music are permissible and that playing chess is not contrary to Islamic law. As a result, interest in traditional Iranian music .has thrived since the Revolution

Imam Khomeini has also encouraged women to play an expanded role in society, to .the chagrin of more conservative interpreters of Islamic law

To Western observers it may seem paradoxical that the very same man who preached tolerance with respect to the perceived challenges to orthodoxy posed by philosophy, mysticism, poetry, and music, should also have been so intolerant toward the proponents of Westernization, toward the form of Marxism propagated in the name of Islam by the People's Mojahiden Organization (PMOI), and toward those .who, like Salman Rushdie, would insult the Prophet of Islam or his family

The apparent contradiction is removed once it is recognized that Imam Khomeini did not value tolerance for its own sake, but for the sake of Islam. Central to Imam ,Khomeini's understanding of Islam is gnosis, 'irfan. In Sunni Islam

the exoteric and esoteric dimensions of religion have been kept largely distinct, with .the esoteric mostly confined to the Sufi orders

In Shi‘ite Islam, there has been a long tradition in which many of the practices and teachings of the Sufis have been integrated into the religious life and thought of an important segment of the official clergy. Those form of mysticism, or gnosis, draws upon the Sufi theory of Ibn al-‘Arabi, the philosophical mysticism of Sadr ad-Din Shirazi(۱) (d. ۱۶۴۰) and Hadi Sabzewari(۲) (d. ۱۸۷۸), both of whom were Shi‘ite clerics, and the poetic expression of mysticism by Mawlawi Jalal ad-Din ar-Rumi(۳) (d. ۱۲۷۳) .(and Hafiz (۴)(d. ۱۳۹۱

The poetry is often set to music. Because of political and religious repression, those involved in ‘irfan often had to keep their teachings underground. Imam Khomeini, in line with sentiments his reports having been expressed by his teacher Shahabadi, .sought to initiate a process through which ‘irfan could become public

This process was not to be a sudden revolution. His own works on ‘irfan were not very widely distributed during his lifetime, but a persistent emphasis on the mystical elements of Shi‘te thought were interspersed among the more popular political .declaration, and may be found in The Greatest Jihad, as well

The revolutionary Islamic movement led by Imam Khomeini may even be viewed as the exoteric dimension of the impetus to reveal Islamic mysticism to the public. The Islamic revolution was a means to bring Islam into public life, from which it

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(.See ft. ۲, p. VIII-IX.(Pub -۱

Hajji Hadi Sabzewari (۱۷۹۷-۱۸۷۸) was the philosopher and poet noted for- ۲ disseminating and clarifying the doctrines of Mulla Sadra. The Qajar Shah Nasir ad-(.Din ordered a mausoleum to be built for him at Mashhad. (Pub

Mawlawi Jalal ad-Din ar-Rumi (۱۲۰۷-۱۲۷۳) was the greatest mystic poet in the Farsi -۳ language and founder of the Mawlawiyyah order of dervishes (“The Whirling Dervishes”). He is famous for his lyrics and for his didactic epic, Spiritual Couplets.

(.(Pub

Khwajah Shams ad-Din Muhammad Hafiz Shirazi (ca. ۱۳۲۵-۱۳۹۱) was the fourteenth -۴ century Persian lyric bard and panegyrist, and commonly considered as the (.preeminent master of the ghazal form. (Pub

was being marginalized during the reign of the Shah. The process of making Islam central to public life was also resisted by conservative religious groups, who saw in .this movement a departure from tradition

Imam Khomeini argued that the guardian jurist of Islamic law had the authority to modify the traditional understanding of the law in order to protect the Islamic order. Conservatives would argue that any break from tradition could only bring deviation .from Islamic order

The kind of judgment required by Imam Khomeini's vision of Islamic government is one which goes beyond what is provided for in traditional discussions of Islamic jurisprudence. It is a kind of wisdom, however, which can be expected of the 'perfect .man', the insan kamil, the goal of personal development in the mystic tradition

An example of the way in which his political awareness demanded a tolerance not found among more conservative clerics may be found in his attitudes toward Sunni Islam. In traditional Shi'ite circles it would not be considered permissible for a Shi'ite to stand behind a Sunni prayer leader. Imam Khomeini ruled that such prayer was .valid, and even himself publicly participated in ritual prayer behind a Sunni cleric

Thus, the flexibility and tolerance which characterized Imam Khomeini's thought do not stem from the libertarian element in Islamic thought, but from a commitment to a movement from the esoteric to exoteric dimensions of Islamic life, a movement which demanded the implementation of Islamic law as well as the propagation of mystical .ideas

Imam

Khomeini's attitudes toward mysticism and politics are especially well illustrated by his invitation to President Gorbachev to embrace Islam. On January ٧, ١٩٨٩, Imam Khomeini sent a delegation to Moscow led by Ayatullah Jawad Amuli who presented Imam's letter of invitation to President Gorbachev. (١)

In the letter, Imam Khomeini congratulated Gorbachev for his admission of the failures of communism, and he suggested that the Soviet leader consider the alternative to communist ideology posed by Islam.

In order to acquaint the Russian leader with Islam, Imam Khomeini recommended the works of the philosophers Farabi and Ibn Sina (Avicenna), and the mystic, Ibn al-'Arabi. Conservative clerics were incensed that Imam should choose to represent Islamic thought through the works of philosophers and a Sufi, instead of works of jurisprudence and traditional devotional literature.

President Gorbachev politely declined the invitation to convert, although he said that he would consider the importance of spiritual values in society. Imam Khomeini appears to have been genuinely disappointed that the response was not affirmative, and when a Soviet delegate read Gorbachev's reply to Imam Khomeini in Tehran.

Imam repeatedly interrupted with criticism of the views expressed in the letter. Such unconventional diplomacy demonstrates Imam's propagation, despite criticism from the clergy which he championed. It also provides an indication of the unusual way in which mysticism and politics were combined in the thinking of Imam Khomeini.

Imam wrote several works which treated mystical topics, or which treated topics in a way characteristic of the mystical tradition. Their titles are suggestive: Commentary

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١ - The text of the said letter of Imam Khomeini to Mikhail Gorbachev along with explanatory notes is published by this Institute under the title, A Call to Divine Unity. Its second edition is forthcoming. (Pub.)

on the Supplication before Dawn (Sharh ad-Du'a as-Sahar), The Lamp of Guidance to Vicegerency and Guardianship (Misbah al-Hidayat ala'l-Khilafat wal-Wilayah), The Countenance of Allah (Liqa' Allah), The Secret of Prayer: Prayers of the Gnostics or (Ascension of the Wayfarers (Sirr as-Salat: Salat al-'Arifin ya Mi'raj as-Salikin

Annotation to the Commentary on 'Bezels of Wisdom' (Ta'liqat ala Sharh al-Fusus al-Hikam), Annotation to the Commentary on 'The Lamp of Intimacy' (Ta'liqat ala Sharh ,(al-Misbah al-Uns

Two books of commentaries and annotations to another commentary on a collection of reports regarding the Prophet and Imams called Ras al-Jalut, Lectures on Surah al-Fatihah, Marginalia to 'The Journeys' (Hashiyeh ala'l-Asfar), Disciplines of the Prayer (Adab as-Salat), Commentary on Forty Sayings of the Prophet and Imams (Chehel .(Hadith

After he became a marja'-e taqlid, political events dominated the life of Imam Khomeini. In ۱۹۶۳, the Shah's forces massacred thousands who protested against the dictatorship. Imam Khomeini was arrested for his inflammatory speeches and was taken to Tehran. Later he was released with the announcement that he had agreed to refrain from further political activity. He denied that he had made any such .agreement and was picked up again

He was taken to an unknown destination by car. When the car turned off the main highway, it is reported that Imam imagined that he would be assassinated in a remote quarter of the desert. He felt his heart to see if it was racing, but found out that it was calm. He narrated that he was never afraid. He

.was taken to a small airstrip where a plane waited to take him to exile in Turkey

The following year his place of exile was changed to the shrine city of Najaf in southern Iraq. Imam Khomeini remained in Najaf for fourteen years, and it was during these years that the lectures collected under the title, Jihad al-Akbar were delivered. In ١٩٧٨, the Shah put pressure on the Ba‘athist government in Iraq to expel .Ayatullah Khomeini

After being refused asylum at the airport in Kuwait, Imam commented that he would spend his life traveling from one airport to another, but that he would not be keep silence. Finally, he was admitted to France, where he resided at Neauphle-le-Châteaux, outside Paris. In February ١٩٧٩, he returned triumphantly to Iran and the .Islamic Republic was launched

Imam Khomeini was revered for the simplicity of his life-style and for his rigorous attention to even supererogatory details of Islamic ritual. He is said to have always faced Mecca when he performed ablutions. He preferred to purchase the less expensive shoes. If he drank half a glass of water, he would put a piece of paper over .it to keep the dust out and save the rest for later

Some claim that he had a special relation with the twelfth Imam, the Mahdi, peace be upon him, the awaited one who will defeat injustice prior to the final judgment. Such .claims are also part of the mystical tradition of Shi‘ite Islam

Yet another year of our lives has

passed. You young people are advancing toward old age, and we old people toward death. During this academic year you have become aware of the extent of your learning and study. You know how much you have acquired and how high the edifice .of your education has been raised

However, with respect to the refinement of virtue, the acquisition of religious manners, divine learning and purification of the soul, what have you done? What positive steps have you taken? Have you had any thought of refinement or self-reformation? Have you had any program in this field? Unfortunately, I must submit that you have not done anything striking, and that with regard to the reformation and .refinement of the self you have not taken any great steps

Recommendations for the Seminaries of Religious Learning

Simultaneous with the study of scholarly matters, the seminaries of religious learning are in need of teaching and learning in morals and spirituality. It is necessary to have moral guides, trainers for the spiritual abilities, and sessions for advice and counseling. Programs in ethics and moral reform, classes in manners and refinement, instruction in divine learning, which are the principle aim of the mission of the .prophets, peace be upon them, must be officially instituted in the seminaries

Unfortunately, scant attention is paid in the centers of learning to these essential issues. Spiritual studies are declining, so that in the future the seminaries will not be able to train scholars of ethics, refined and polished counselors, or godly men. Occupation with discussion and inquiry

into elementary problems does not allow the opportunity for the basic and fundamental topics which are instances of the favors of the Noble Qur'an and of the .great Prophet (s) and the other prophets and saints (awliya), peace be with them

The great jurist-consults and high-ranking professors, who are noteworthy in the scholarly community, had better try, in the course of their lessons and discussions, to train and refine people and to be more concerned with spiritual and ethical topics. For the seminary students it is also necessary that in their efforts to acquire erudition and refinement of the soul that they give sufficient weight to their important duties and .momentous responsibilities

You who today are studying in these seminaries, and who shall tomorrow take charge of the leadership and guidance of society, do not imagine that your only duty is to learn a handful of terms, for you have other duties as well. In these seminaries you must build and train yourselves so that when you go to a city or village you will be able .to guide the people there and show them refinement

It is expected that when you depart from the center for the study of religious law, you yourselves will be refined and cultivated, so that you will be able to cultivate the people and train them according to Islamic ethical manners and precepts. If, God forbid, you were not to realize spiritual ideals then, may Allah protect us, everywhere ,you would go people would be perverted

.and you would have given them a low opinion of Islam and of the clergy

You have a heavy responsibility. If you do not fulfill your duty in the seminaries, if you do not plan your refinement, and if you merely pursue the learning of a few terms and issues of law and jurisprudence, then God protect us from the damage that you might cause in the future to Islam and Islamic society. It is possible, may Allah protect us, for .you to pervert and mislead the people

If due to your actions, deeds and unfair behavior, one person looses his way and leaves Islam, you would be guilty of the greatest of the major sins, and it would be difficult for your repentance to be accepted. Likewise, if one person finds guidance,)then according to a narration, "It is better than all upon which the sun doth shine." (۱

.Your responsibility is very heavy. You have duties other than those of the laity

How many things are permissible for the laity which are not allowed for you, and may possibly be forbidden! People do not expect you to perform many permissible deeds, to say nothing of low unlawful deeds, which if you were to perform them, God forbid, .people would form a bad opinion of Islam and of the clerical community

The trouble is here: if the people witness your actions as contrary to what is expected, they become deviated from religion. They turn away from the clergy, not from just ,one person

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۱ - The Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali, peace be upon him, said: When the Messenger of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be with him and his progeny, sent me to Yemen, he said: O 'Ali! Do not fight against anyone until you invite him to Islam. I swear by Allah, if by your hand the Great and Almighty Allah may guide a man, then it is better for you than all that the sun rises upon or sets upon, and you are his wali (guardian). Al-Kafi, vol. ۵, p. ۳۶, "The Book of Struggle," "Section on .Invitation to Islam Prior to Fighting," hadith ۲

and form a low opinion of just that person! But if they see an unbecoming action contrary to decorum on the part of a single cleric, they do not examine it and analyze .it

At the same time among businessmen there are unrighteousness and perverted people, and among office workers corruption and ugly deeds may be seen, so it is possible that among the clergy there may also be one or more impious or deviant persons. Hence, if a grocer does something wrong, it is said that such and such grocer is a wrongdoer. If a druggist is guilty of an ugly deed, it is said that such a druggist is .an evildoer

However, if a preacher performs an unbecoming act, it is not said that such and such a preacher is deviant, it is said that preachers are bad. The responsibilities of the learned are very heavy, the ‘ulama have more duties than other people. If you review the chapters related to the responsibilities of the ‘ulama in Usul al-Kafi and Wasa’il, (١) you will see how they describe the heavy responsibilities and serious obligation of the .learned

It is narrated that when the soul reaches the throat, there is no longer any chance for repentance and in that state one’s repentance will not be accepted, although God (accepts the repentance of the ignorant until the last minute of their lives. (٢

In another narration it is reported that seventy sins will be forgiven of one who is ignorant before one

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Usul al-Kafi, “Book of the Virtue of Knowledge” [Kitab Fadl al-‘Ilm], Chapters: “bab -١ sifat al-‘ulama,” “bab badh al-‘ilm,” “bab an-nahy ‘an al-qawl bi ghayr ‘ilm,” “bab isti‘mal al-‘ilm,” “bab al-musta’kil bi ‘ilmihi wal-mubahi bihi,” “bab luzum al-hujjah ‘ala’l-‘alim,” “bab an-nawadir,” and Wasa’il ash-Shi‘ah, vol. ١٨, pp. ٩-١٧, ٩٨-١٢٩, “kitab .al-qada,” Chapters: “abwab sifat al-qadi,” bab ۴, ١١, ١٢

Jamil ibn Durraj says that he heard from Imam as-Sadiq, peace be with him, that -٢ he said, “When the soul reaches here (and with his hand he pointed to his neck) for the

learned there remains no further chance of repentance." Then he recited this ayah: "The repentance of Allah is only for those who do evil in ignorance" (Q ۴:۱۷). Usul al-Kafi, vol. ۱, p. ۵۹, "The Book of the Virtue of Knowledge," "Chapter on the Requirement for an 'Alim to Bring Proof," hadith ۳.

sin is forgiven of an ‘alim. (1) This is because the sin of an ‘alim is very harmful to Islam and to Islamic society.

If a vulgar and ignorant person commits a sin, he only wins misfortunes for himself. However, if an ‘alim becomes deviant, if he becomes involved in ugly deeds, he perverts an entire world (‘alam). He has injured Islam and the ‘ulama of Islam. (2) There is also a narration according to which the people of hell suffer from the stench of an ‘alim whose deeds do not accord with his knowledge(3)

For this very reason, in this world there is a great difference between an ‘alim and an ignorant person with regard to benefit and injury to Islam and to the Islamic community. If an ‘alim is deviant, it is possible that the community will become infected by deviation. And if an ‘alim is refined, and he observes the morality and manners of Islam, he will refine and guide the community.

In some of the towns to which I went during the summer, I saw that the people of a town were well mannered with religious morals. The point is this, that they had an ‘alim who was righteous and pious. If an ‘alim who is pious and righteous lives in a community, town or state, his very existence will raise the refinement and guidance of the people of that realm, even if he does not verbally propagate and guide. (4)

We have seen people whose existence

1- Hafs ibn Qiyyas said that Imam as-Sadiq, peace be with him, said: “O Hafs! Seventy sins will be forgiven of an ignorant person before one sin is forgiven of an ‘alim.” Usul al-Kafi, vol. ۱, p. ۵۹, “The Book of the Virtue of Knowledge,” “Chapter on the Requirement for an ‘Alim to Bring Proof.”

2- The Prophet of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be with him and his progeny, said, “There are two groups from my community such that if they are righteous then the community will be righteous, and if they are corrupt, then the community will become corrupt.” It was asked, “Who are they?” He replied, “The ‘ulama and the rulers.” Khisal [by Shaykh as-Saduq], The Second Chapter, p. ۳۷; Tuhaf

.al-‘Uqul, p. ۵۰

Sulaym ibn Qays Hilali said that he heard from the Commander of the Faithful,] -۳ peace be with him, that he reported from the Prophet, that he said, “There are two kinds of ‘ulama, one who acts in accordance with his knowledge, so he has been saved, and the ‘alim who does not act in accordance with his knowledge, so he will perish. And truly the people of hell will suffer from thestench of the ‘alim who does not act in accordance with his knowledge.” Usul al-Kafi, vol. ۱, p. ۵۵, The Book of the Virtue .of Knowledge, Chapter on the Application of Knowledge, hadith ۱

Imam as-Sadiq, peace be with him, said, “Invite the people to excellence, but not by -۴ your tongue, rather let people see in you right struggle [ijtihad], truthfulness and ”.piety

causes lessons to be learned, merely seeing them and looking at them raises one's awareness. At present in Tehran, about which I have some information, the neighborhoods differ from one another. Neighborhoods in which a pure and refined 'alim lives have righteous people with strong faith.

In another neighborhood where a corrupt deviant person wears the turban, and has become the prayer leader, and set up shop, you will see that the people there have been misled, and have been polluted and perverted. This is the same pollution from the stench which the evil 'alim, the 'alim without action, the perverted 'alim has brought in this world, and the smell of it causes the people of hell to suffer.

It is not because something is added to him there, that which occurs to this 'alim in the next world is something which has been prepared in this world. Nothing is given to us except that which we have done. If an 'alim is corrupt and evil, he corrupts the society, although in this world we are not able to smell the stench of it. However, in the next world stench of it will be perceived. But a vulgar person is not able to bring such corruption and pollution into the Islamic society.

A vulgar person would never allow himself to proclaim that he was an Imam or the Mahdi, to proclaim himself a prophet, or to have received revelation. It is a corrupt 'alim who corrupt the worlds: "if an 'alim

(is corrupt, a world ('alam) is corrupted." (1)

The Importance of the Refinement and Purification of the Soul

Those who have constructed [their own] religions, causing the straying and deviation of masses of peoples, have for the most part been scholars. Some of them even studied and disciplined themselves in the centers of learning(2) The head of one of the heretical sects studied in these very seminaries of ours.

However, since his learning was not accompanied by refinement and purification, since he did not advance on the path toward God, and since he did not remove the pollution from himself, he bore the fruit of ignominy. If man does not cast pollution from the core of his soul, not only will whatever studying and learning he does be of no benefit by itself, rather it will actually be harmful.

When evil enters knowledge in this center, the product will be evil, root and branch, an evil tree. However much these concepts are accumulated in a black impure heart that which covers them will be greater. In a soul which is unrefined, knowledge is a dark cover: Al-'ilm huwa al-hijab al-akbar (Knowledge is the greatest cover). Therefore, the vice of a corrupt 'alim is greater and more dangerous for Islam than all vices.

Knowledge is light, but in a black corrupt heart it spreads wide the skirts of darkness and blackness. A knowledge which would draw man closer to God, in a worldly soul brings him far distant from the place of the Almighty. Even the knowledge of divine unity

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۱- Ghurar al-Hikam, vol. ۷, p. ۲۶۹.

۲- This group includes Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (founder of the Wahhabi sect), Shaykh Ahmad Ahsa'i and Sayyid Kazim Rashti (founders of the Shaykhi sect), Ahmad Kasravi, and Ghulam Ahmad (founder of the Qadiyani sect).

tawhid), if it is for anything other than God, it becomes a cover of darkness, for it is a) .preoccupation with that which is other than God

If one memorizes and recites the Noble Qur'an in all fourteen different canonical methods of recital, if it is for anything other than God, it will not bring him anything but covering and distance from Haqq Ta'ala (God). If you study, and go to some trouble, you may become an 'alim, but you had better know that there is a big difference .between being an 'alim and being refined

The late Shaykh, (۱) our teacher, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "That which is said, 'How easy it is to become a mullah; how difficult it is to become a man,' is not correct. It should be said, 'How difficult it is to become a mullah, and it is impossible to "!become a man

The acquisition of the virtues and human nobilities and standards is a difficult and great duty which rests upon your shoulders. Do not supposed now that you are engaged in studying the religious sciences, and learning fiqh (jurisprudence) which is the most honorable of these sciences, that you can take it easy otherwise, and that your responsibilities and duties will take care of themselves. If you do not have a pure .intention of approaching God, these sciences will be of no benefit at all

If your studies, may Allah protect us, are not for the sake of God, and are for

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Grand Ayatullah Haj Shaykh 'Abd al-Karim Ha'iri Yazdi (۱۲۷۶-۱۳۵۵ AH), was one of -۱ the greatest of Islamic jurists and a source of imitation of the Shi'ah in the fourteenth Islamic century. He attended the classes of masters such as Mirza-ye Bozorg Shirazi, Mirza Muhammad Taqi Shirazi, Akhund Khorasani, Sayyid Kazim Yazdi, Sayyid Muhammad Isfahani Fesharaki, in Najaf and Samarra. In the year ۱۳۴۰ AH/۱۹۲۱, at the insistence of the 'ulama of Qum after finding a good omen in a passage from the Qur'an he took up residence in Qum and organized the Seminary of Qum. Among his works are Durar al-Fawa'id dar Usul, As-Salah, An-Nikah, Ar-Rida, Al-Mawarith, in all .the fields of jurisprudence

the sake of personal desires, the acquisition of position and the seats of authority, title and prestige, then you will accumulate nothing for yourself but harm and disaster. .This terminology you are learning, if it is for anything but God, it is harm and disaster

This terminology, as much as it increases, if it is not accompanied by refinement and fear of God [taqwa], then it will end in harm in this world and the next for the Muslim community. Merely knowing terminology is not effective. Even the knowledge of the divine unity ['ilm al-tawhid] if it is not accompanied with purity of the soul, it will bring disaster. How many individuals have been 'ulama with knowledge of monotheism, ?and have perverted whole groups of people

How many individuals have had the very same knowledge that you have, or even more knowledge, but were deviant and did not reform themselves, so that when they entered the community, they perverted many and led them astray? This dry terminology, if it is not accompanied by piety [taqwa] and refinement of the soul, as much as it accumulates in one's mind it will only lead to the expansion of pride and .conceit in the realm of the soul

The unfortunate 'alim who is defeated by his own conceit cannot reform himself or his community, and it will result in nothing but harm to Islam and the Muslims. And after years of studying and wasting religious funding, enjoying his Islamic salary and fringe benefits, he

.will become an obstacle in the way of Islam and the Muslims

Nations will be perverted by him. The result of these lessons and discussion and the time spent in the seminary will be the prevention of the introduction to the world of Islam and the truths of the Qur’an; rather, it is possible that his existence will be .barrier preventing the society from coming to know Islam and spirituality

I am not saying that you should not study, that you should not acquire knowledge, but you have to pay attention, for if you want to be a useful and effective member of society and Islam and lead a nation to awareness of Islam and to defend the fundamentals of Islam, it is necessary that the basis of jurisprudence be strengthened and that you gain mastery of the subject. If, God forbid, you fail to .study, then it is forbidden for you to remain in the seminary

You may not use the religious salary of the students of the religious sciences. Of course, the acquisition of knowledge is necessary, although in the same way that you take pains with the problems of fiqh and usul (jurisprudence and its principles), you .must make efforts in the path of self-reformation

Every step forward which you take in the acquisition of knowledge should be matched by a step taken to beat down the desires of the soul, to strengthen one’s spiritual .[powers, to acquire nobility of character, and to gain spirituality and piety [taqwa

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learning of these sciences in reality is an introduction to the refinement of the soul and the acquisition of virtue, manners and divine knowledge. Do not spend your entire life with the introduction, so that you leave aside the conclusion. You are acquiring .these sciences for the sake of a holy and high aim, knowing God and refining the self

You should make plans to realize the results and effects of you work, and you should be serious about reaching your fundamental and basic goal. When you enter the .seminary, before anything else, you should plan to reform yourselves

While you are in the seminary, along with your studies, you should refine yourselves, so that when you leave the seminary and become the leader of a people in a city or district, they may profit from you, take advice from you, and reform themselves by .means of your deeds and manners and your ethical virtues

Try to reform and refine yourselves before you enter among the people. If now, while you are unencumbered, you do not reform yourselves, on the day when people come .before you, you will not be able to reform yourselves

Many things ruin people and keep them from studying and purifying themselves, and one of them, for some, is this very beard and turban! When the turban becomes a bit large, and the beard gets long, if one has not refined oneself, this can hinder one's studies, and restrict one. It is difficult to trample the commanding

.self under one’s feet, and to sit at the feet of another for lessons

Shaykh at-Tusi, (١) may Allah have mercy on him, at the age of fifty-two would go to classes, while between the ages of twenty and thirty, he wrote some of his books! His Tahdhib was possibly written during this period. (٢) Yet at the age of fifty-two he attended the classes of the late Sayyid Murtada, (٣) may Allah have mercy on him, and .thereby achieved a similar status as he did

God forbid that prior to acquiring good habits and strengthening one’s spiritual powers that one’s beard should turn a bit white and that his turban should get big, so that he would lose the blessings of knowledge and spirituality. So work, before your beards before white; before you gain the attention of the people, think about your !state

God forbid that before a person develops himself, that people should pay heed to him, that he should become a personality and have influence among the people, causing him to loose his soul. Before you loose hold of the reins of your self, develop and reform yourself! Adorn yourselves with good traits, and remove your vices! Become !pure in your lessons and discussions, so that you may approach God

If one does not have good intentions, one will be kept far from the divine precincts. Beware that, after seventy years, when the book of your deeds is opened, Allah forbid that you should have been far

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١- Abu Ja‘far Muhammad ibn Hasan at-Tusi (٣٨٥-۴۶٠ AH/٩٩٥-١٠۶٧ CE). He is known as Shaykh at-Ta’ifah, and he was one of the most distinguished scholars of the Imami Shi‘ah. He was the head of the jurists and theologians of his time and he was also strong in literature, biography, exegesis, and hadith. His teachers were Shaykh Mufid, Sayyid Murtada, Ibn Ghada’iri, and Ibn ‘Abdun. The Shaykh is the author of two famous books of Shi‘ite hadiths, Istibsar and Tahdhib, and are counted among the four (most important) books of the Imami Shi‘ah. Shaykh at-Tusi established Najaf as .the center for Shi‘ite learning

۲ - Shaykh at-Tusi began to write the Tahdhib, which is a commentary on the Mughni'ah of Shaykh Mufid, during the lifetime of his teacher (Shaykh Mufid, d. ۴۱۳ AH/۱۰۲۲ CE). Shaykh at-Tusi was about twenty-six old at that time.

۳- Ali ibn Husayn ibn Musa, known as Sayyid Murtada, and 'Alam al-Huda (۳۵۵-۴۳۶ AH/۹۶۵-۱۰۴۴ CE), is one of the greatest scholars of Islam and Shi'ism. Most of the great scholars of the Imami Shi'ah, including Shaykh at-Tusi, have benefited from his teaching. He wrote: Amali, Adh-Dhari'ah ila Usul ash-Shari'ah, An-Nasiriat, Al-Intisar, and Ash-Shafi.

from God Almighty for seventy years. Have you heard the story of the 'stone' which was dropped into hell? Only after seventy years was the sound of its hitting the bottom of hell heard.

According to a narration, the Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be with him and his progeny, said that it was an old man who died after seventy years, and during these seventy years he was falling into hell(١)

Be careful that in the seminary, by your own labor and the sweat of your brow during fifty years, more or less, that you do not thereby reach hell! You had better think! Make plans in the field of refinement and purification of the soul, and reformation of character.

Choose a teacher of morals for yourself, and arrange sessions for advice, counsel, and admonition. You cannot become refined by yourself. If there is no place in the seminary for moral counselors and sessions of advice and exhortation, it will be doomed to annihilation.

How could it be that fiqh and usul (jurisprudence and its principles) should require teachers for lessons and discussions, and that for every science and skill a teacher is necessary, and no one becomes an expert or learned in any specific field by being cocky and disdainful, yet with regard to the spiritual and ethical sciences, which are the goal of the mission of the prophets and are among the most subtle and exact sciences, they do not require teaching and learning, and one

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١- Fayd Kashani, Kalamat Maknunah, p. ١٢٣.

!may obtain them oneself without a teacher

I have heard on numerous occasions that the late Shaykh Ansari, (۱)was a student of a great Sayyid(۲) who was a teacher of ethics and spirituality. The prophets of God were raised in order to train the people, to develop humanity, and to remove them from ugliness, filth, corruption, pollution, moral turpitude, and to acquaint them with virtue and good manners, "I was raised in order to complete noble virtue [Makarim al-Akhlaq]. (۳)

This knowledge which was considered by God Almighty to be so important that He raised the prophets for it is not considered unfashionable in the seminaries for our clergy. No one gives it the importance of which it is worthy. Due to the lack of spiritual and gnostic works in the seminaries, material and worldly problems have come so far as to penetrate the clergy [ruhaniyyat], and has kept many of them away from holiness and spirituality [ruhaniyyat].

So that they do not even know what ruhaniyyat means, nor what the responsibilities of a cleric are and what kind of programs they should have. Some of them merely plan to learn a few words, return to their own localities, or somewhere else, and to grab facilities and position, and to wrestle with others [for them].

Like one who said: "Let me study Sharh al-Lum'ah(۴) and then I will know what to do with the village chief!" Do not be this way, that from the beginning you aim to win someone's position by

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۱- Shaykh Murtada Ansari (۱۲۱۴-۱۲۸۱ AH/۱۷۹۹-۱۸۶۴), known as Khatam al-Fuqaha wal-Mujtahidin, was one of the descendants of Jabir ibn 'Abdullah al-Ansari, a Companion of the Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be with him and his progeny. He was a genius in the Principles of Jurisprudence ['ilm al-usul], and hebrought great developments in this field. Some of his professors were Shaykh Musa Kashif al-Ghita, Shaykh 'Ali Kashif al-Ghita, Mulla Ahmad Naraqi, and Sayyid Muhammad Mujahid. Shaykh Ansari trained some great jurists, including Akhund Khorasani, Mirza Shirazi

and Mirza Muhammad Hasan Ashtiani. His works include Fara’id al-Usul (known as .Rasa’il) and Makasib, one of the most famous text books

Sayyid ‘Ali ibn Sayyid Muhammad (d. ١٢٨٣ AH/١٨۶۶), was one of the great ascetics - ٢ and mystics of his day. He received authorization (as a mujtahid) from Shaykh Ansari and Sayyid Husayn, the Friday Prayer leader of Shushtar. Sayyid ‘Ali spent some time in Shushtar as a judge and legal authority (mufti), and then moved to Najaf al-Ashraf. There he attended the classes of Shaykh Ansari in fiqh. And Shaykh Ansari also attended his classes in ethics. When Shaykh Ansari passed away, Sayyid ‘Ali was the executor of his will and he succeeded him in his professional position. The late Shaykh Sayyid ‘Ali was the professor and counselor of Akhund Mulla Husaynqulli Hamadani, who had many students who were led by him, some of the greatest of whom were Mirza Jawad Maliki Tabrizi, Sayyid Ahmad Karbala’i, Shaykh Shaykh Bihari, Sayyid ‘Ali .Qadi Tabrizi, and ‘Allamah Tabataba’i

Majma‘ al-Bayan, under the exegesis of the fourth ayah of the Surah al-Qalam - ٣ .[[Chapter: The Pen

As a major work of Shaykh Zayn ad-Din ibn ‘Ali al-‘Amili al-Juba’i (٩١١-٩۶۶ AH), - ۴ better known as ash-Shahid ath-Thani [The Second Martyr], Sharh al-Lum‘ah (likewise known as Rawdah al-Bahiyyah)is the book on the foundations of canonical theology, which is actually the commentary on Al-Lum‘ah written by ash-Shahid al-Awwal [The First Martyr], Shams ad-Din Muhammad ibn Makki al-‘Amili al-Jizzini (٧٣۴-٧٨۶ AH). Though written four centuries ago, it continues to be studied in the Islamic seminaries today. For biographical sketches of ash-Shahid al-Awwal and ash-Shahid ath-Thani, see Mulla Asghar ‘Ali Jaffer, Fiqh and Fuqaha (Middlesex: World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Muslim Communities, n.d.) chapter ٢, http://www.al-(.islam.org/fiqh-and-fuqaha-world-federation-of-ksimc [١٢] (Pub

studying, and that you intend to be the chief of some town or village. You may achieve your selfish desires and satanic expectations, but for yourself and the Islamic community you will acquire nothing except harm and misfortune. Mu‘awiyah(۱) was also chief for a long time, but for himself he achieved no result or benefit except .curses and loathing and the chastisement of the life hereafter

It is necessary for you to refine yourselves, so that when you become the chief of a community or a clan, you will be able to refine them, as well. In order to be able to take steps toward the reform and development of a community, your aim should be service to Islam and the Muslims. If you take steps for the sake of God, God the .Almighty is the turner of the hearts

:He will turn hearts in favor of you

Surely for those who believe and do good deeds, the Merciful (ar-Rahman) will bring“ .(about love” (Q ۱۹:۹۶

Take some trouble on the way to God, devote yourselves; God will not leave you unpaid, if not in this world, then in the next He will reward you. If, aside from Him, you have no reward in this world, what could be better? This world is nothing. This pomp and these personalities will come to an end after a few days, like a dream passes .before the eyes of man, but the other worldly reward is infinite and never ending

Warnings to the Seminaries

It is possible that

۱- Mu‘awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan was the first caliph of the Umayyad dynasty (۴۰ AH/۶۶۲ CE), which ruled the Muslim world after the martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib and the five-month rule of the second Imam, Hasan ibn ‘Ali (‘a). As the founder of the Umayyad dynasty (Umayyad is derived from Bani ‘Umayyah, the name of the tribe to whom he belonged), Mu‘awiyah revived hereditary monarchy and aristocracy in sharp contrast and opposition to the

rudimentary precepts of Islam. History is replete with innumerable instances of cruelty and oppression perpetrated in the world of Islam during the reign of the Umayyads including the murder, banishment and imprisonment of the followers of the Prophet’s Progeny [Ahl al-Bayt] (‘a) as epitomized by the tragedy in Karbala (۶۱ AH) during the reign of Mu‘awiyah’s son and second Umayyad caliph, Yazid. (Pub

by spreading poison and evil propaganda impure hands have portrayed ethical and reformatory program as without importance, and have presented going to the mimbar (pulpit) for giving advice and making sermons as contrary to a scholarly station, and they inhibit the work of the great scholarly personalities who have the station of reforming and refining the seminaries by calling them mimbari (mere .(sermonizers

Today, in some seminaries, going to mimbar and giving sermons may even be considered disgraceful! They forget that the Commander of the Faithful, peace be with him, was mimbari (a sermonizer), and from the mimbar he would admonish people, make them aware of things, raise their consciousnesses, and guide them. .Other Imams, peace be with them, were also this way

Perhaps secret agents have injected this evil in order to exterminate spirituality and ethics in the seminaries, and as a result our seminaries have become corrupt and dissolute. God forbid that forming gangs, selfishness, hypocrisy, and disagreements should penetrate the seminaries. The people of the seminaries fight with each other, .they close ranks against one another, and they insult and belie one another

They become discredited in the Islamic community, so that the foreigners and enemies of Islam are able to get hold of the seminaries and destroy them. The ill-intentioned know that the country supports the seminaries, and as long as the .country supports them it is not possible to beat them or tear them apart

But on the day when the people of the seminaries and the

student of the seminaries come to lack ethical principles and Islamic manners, and fight each other, and form opposing gangs, and are not refined and purified, dirty their hands with unsuitable deeds, then naturally the nation of Islam will get a bad impression of the seminaries and the clergy, and support for them will be lost, and .consequently the way for the use of force and enemy influence will be opened

If you see that governments are afraid of a cleric and of a marja‘ (authority in Shi‘ite jurisprudence and source of imitation), and take account of them, it is because of this, that they benefit from the support of the people, and in truth, they are afraid of the people. They consider it probable that if they show contempt and audacity and violate .a cleric, that the people will rebel and rise up against them

However if the clerics oppose one another and defame one another and do not behave with Islamic manners and morals, they will fall from their position in the community, and the people will abandon them. (۱) The people expect you to be ruhani [spiritual, a cleric], well-mannered with the manners of Islam, and to be of the party of .Allah

Restrain yourselves from the splendor and glitter of life and artificiality, and do not refuse any kind of self-sacrifice in the way of the advancement of Islamic ideals and service to the nation of Islam. Step forward on the way of God the Almighty

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Ali, peace be with him, said: “If the bearers of ‘ilm (knowledge, science) bear it as it‘ -۱ deserves to be borne, they will be loved by Allah, the angels, and those who are obedient to Him, and those who bear it for the sake of this world will be despised by Allah and held in contempt by the people.” Tuhaf al-‘Uqul, p. ۲۰۱, Chapter on the words .of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be with him

.to please Him, and except for the unique Creator pay attention to no one

However, if, contrary to what is expected, it is seen that instead of paying attention to metaphysics, all you care about is this world, and just like the others you try to gain worldly and personal interests, and you fight with one another for the sake of the world and its base pleasures, and you take Islam and the Qur’an, may Allah forbid it, as playthings, simply to reach sinister goals and your own dirty, disgraceful and worldly intentions, and you turn your religion into a market place, then the people will .be turned away and become cynical

So, you will be responsible. If some of those who wear the turban and burden the seminaries fight and brawl with each other and malign and slander one another because of personal grudges and the pursuit of worldly interests, and rivalry over some positions, they commit some treason against Islam and the Qur’an and they violate the divine trust. God the Almighty has placed the holy religion of Islam in our .hands as a trust

The noble Qur’an is a great divine trust. The ‘ulama and ruhaniyyun [clergy] are the bearers of the divine trust, and they bear the responsibility to protect that trust from betrayal. This stubbornness and personal and worldly antagonisms are treachery .against Islam and the great Prophet of Islam

I do not know what purpose is served by these oppositions, formations of cliques, and confrontations. If

it is for the sake of the world, you do not have much of that! Supposing that you did benefit from pleasures and worldly interests, there would be no place for disagreements, unless you were not ruhani [spiritual, a cleric], and the only thing you .inherited of ruhaniyyat [spirituality, being a cleric] was the robe and turban

A ruhani [a cleric] who is occupied with metaphysics, a ruhani who benefits from living teachings and reformative Islamic attributes, a ruhani who considers himself a follower of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, peace be with him, is not possibly tempted by the world, .nor would he allow it to cause disagreements

You who have declared yourselves to be followers of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be with him, you should at least make a bit of research into the life of that great man, and see if you are really one of his followers! Do you know and practice anything ?of his asceticism, taqwa [piety, God-wariness] and simple unadorned life

Do you know anything of that great man's combat against oppression and injustice, and class differences, and of his unhesitating defense and support of the oppressed and persecuted, of how he lent a hand to the dispossessed and suffering social classes? Have you put it into practice? Is the meaning of the "Shi'ite" nothing more than the ornamental appearances of Islam? (۱)۳۲

Therefore, what is the difference between you and other Muslims, in virtue of which they are much further ahead and more

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Sifat ash-Shi'ah, written by Shaykh as-Saduq, and also Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۶۵, pp. -۱ ۸۳-۹۵ and ۱۴۹-۱۹۶, "The Book of Faith and Infidelity," vol. ۶۵, pp. ۸۳-۹۵, ۱۴۹-۱۹۶, "The Book of Faith and Infidelity," the section on "Verily the Shi'ah are the people of the religion of Allah...", the section on the Attributes of the Shi'ah and their kinds..." Sharh-e Chehel Hadith, Imam Khomeini (may he rest in peace), hadith ۲۹, translated by 'Ali Quli Qara'i as Forty Hadiths: An Exposition of Mystical and Ethical Traditions, in the journal, Al-Tawhid, vol. X. [Tr.] and available on line at: http://www.al-islam.org/forty-(hadith-an-exposition-second-edition-imam-k... [۱۳] (Pub

?advantageous than the Shi‘ah? What distinguishes you over them

Those who today have set a part of the world on fire, who spill blood and kill, do this because they are competing with each other in looting the nations of the world and swallowing their wealth and the products of their labor, and in bringing the weak and .underdeveloped countries under their dominion and control

Thus, in the name of freedom, development and prosperity, the defense of independence and protection of borders, and under other deceptive slogans, every day the flames of war are set in some corner of the world, and millions of tons of incendiary bombs are dropped upon nations without protection. This fighting seems .correct and accords with the logic of worldly people whose brains are polluted

However, your conflicts, even according to their logic, are incorrect. If asked why they are fighting, they will say that they want to take over such and such a country; the wealth and income of such and such a country must be made ours. However, if you asked why you have conflicts, and why you are fighting, what will be your answers? ?What benefit do you get from the world, for the sake of which you are fighting

Your monthly income, which the marja‘-e taqlid [supreme authorities of religious jurisprudence] give to you, called shahriyyah, is less than the money used by others for cigarettes! I saw in a newspaper or magazine, I don’t recall exactly, that the amount the Vatican sends to

a single priest in Washington is quite a large figure. I reckon it is more than that of the !entire budget for all of the Shi‘ite seminaries

Is it right for you, with your lifestyle and conditions, to have conflicts and confrontations with one another? The root of all these conflicts which have no specific sacred aims is love of this world. If conflicts of this sort exist among you, it is for this reason, that you have not expelled the love of this world from your hearts. Because worldly interests are limited, each one rises up against his rival in order to obtain .them

You desire a certain position, which someone else also wants; naturally this leads to jealousy and strife. However, the people of God, who have expelled the love of this world from their hearts, have no aim but God, never fight with one another, and never cause such calamities and corruption. If all of the divine prophets were together in a city today, there would be no disagreement or conflict among them, for their aims and .destinations are one

The hearts of all of them attend to God the Almighty, and they are clear of any love of .this world

If your deeds and actions, your way of life and your wayfaring are of this sort that is evident today, then you had better fear, may God protect us from it, that you may leave this world without being one of the Shi‘ah of ‘Ali ibn Abi

.Talib(as), peace be upon him

You should fear that your repentance might not be accepted, and that the intercession of Imam ‘Ali (as) may be of no benefit to you. Before loosing the opportunity, you should try to remedy this. Give up these banal and shameful conflicts. These confrontations and conflicts are wrong. Do you compose two nations? ?Why are you not pure and honest and brotherly with one another? Why

These conflicts are dangerous, for they lead to corruption for which there is no compensation: the destruction of the seminaries; and it will make you worthless and dishonored in the community. This banding into gangs is only to your loss. Not only is it of no credit to you, but it brings dishonor and discredit to the community and the .nation, and leads to the harm of Islam

If your oppositions to one another lead to corruption it will be an unforgettable offense and before God Almighty it will be one of the greatest of all sins, because it will corrupt the community and make it wide open to the influence and domination of .the enemy

Perhaps some hidden hands are at work spreading enmity and discord in the seminaries, by various means sowing the seeds of discord and strife poisoning the thoughts and confusing the minds, arranging for such things under the guise of ‘religious duties,’ and by means of such religious duties corruption is established in the seminaries, so that by this means those who are useful

for the future of Islam are destroyed and unable to serve Islam and the Islamic .community in the future

It is necessary to be aware and conscious. Do not fool yourselves into thinking that your religious duties require such things, and that your religious obligations are such and so. Sometimes Satan determines responsibilities and duties for man. Sometimes selfish wants and desires force a man to do things in the name of religious duties. Offending a Muslim and saying something bad about a brother in faith are not .religious duties

This is love of the world and love of self. These are the promptings of Satan which .bring a dark day for a man. This enmity is the enmity of the damned

That most surely is the truth, the contending of one with another of the inmates of" .(the fire" (Q ۳۸:۶۴

Enmity and contention exist in hell. The people of hell have conflicts, fighting and clawing at one another. If you quarrel for the sake of this world, beware that you are .preparing hell for yourself, and you are on the way there

There is no fighting for things of the other world. The people of the other world are pure and at peace with one another. Their hearts are overflowing with the love of God and servitude to Him. The love for the servants of God is the shadow of that very love for God. Do not set your hands on fire. Do not set ablaze the flames of hell. Hell

is lit with the ugly works and deeds of man. These are the deeds of refractory man .which set this fire

It is narrated: "I passed hell when it was extinguished." If a man does not light the fire (by his works and deeds, hell will be extinguished. (١)

The interior of this disposition is hell. To approach this disposition is to approach hell. When man passes away from this world and the curtains are drawn aside, he will ,realize

This is for what your own hands have sent before" (Q ٣:١٨٢), and "and what they had" .(done they shall find present" (Q١٨:٤٩

All of the works and deeds and words of man will be reflected in the other world. It is as if everything in our lives was being filmed, and in that world film will be shown, and one will be able to deny none of it. All of our actions and movements will be shown to .us, in addition to the testimony given by our limbs and organs

.(They shall say: 'Allah who makes everything speak, has made us speak'" (Q ٤١:٢١"

Before God, who will make all things able to speak and bear witness, you will not be able to deny your ugly deeds or hide them. Think a little, look ahead, weigh the consequences of your deeds, keep in mind the perilous events which take place after death, the pressure of the grave, the world of barzakh (the period between death and resurrection), and do not neglect the difficulties

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This refers to a hadith according to which, "When some people asked our Imam - ١ about the inclusiveness of this ayah: 'And there is not one of you but shall come to it [hell]' (Q ١٩:٧١), he replied, "We passed through hell and it was extinguished." 'Ilm al- .Yaqin, vol. ٢, p. ٩١٧

.which will follow that

At least believe in hell. If a man believes in the perilous events which take place after death, he will change his way of life. If you had faith and certainty in these things, you would not live so freely and licentiously. You will try to guard you pen, your steps, and .your tongue, in order to reform and purify yourselves

Divine Blessings

Because He favors His servants, God the Blessed and Supreme gave them intellect, He gave them the power to refine and purify themselves, He sent the prophets and awliya [the friends of God, saints, holy men] to guide people and to help them to reform themselves so that they do not fall into the severe chastisement of hell. If these preventatives do not cause the awareness and refinement of man, God, the Merciful, will make him aware through other means: by various difficulties, afflictions, .poverty, and illness

Like an expert physician or a skilled and kind nurse, He tries to cure a sick man from dangerous spiritual illnesses. If a servant is blessed by God, he will be faced with afflictions until he turns his attention to God the Almighty, and is refined. This is the way, and other than this there is no way, but man must tread this path with his own .feet until he reaches its conclusion

If he does not reach any conclusion in this way, and the misled man is not cured, and he does not deserve the blessings

of heaven, when his soul is drawn from him there will be much pressure on him, so perhaps he will return and be aware. Again, if he is not affected, then in the grave, in the world of barzakh, and in the terrible perilous events which take place after death, he will suffer pressures and chastisement until he becomes purified and refined, and .he will not go to hell

All of these are blessings from Almighty God to prevent man from going to hell. What then if with all these blessings and favors from Almighty God he is still not cured? Then there is no other alternative but the last cure, which is that he should be burned. How many a man has not refined and reformed himself and was not affected by these cures, so that he needed God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, to refine His servant .by fire, just as gold must be purified in fire

(Regarding the ayah (verse

(Living therein for ages" (Q ۷۸:۲۳"

It has been reported that the 'ages' mentioned here are for those who have been guided, those the basis of whose faith has been preserved. (۱) This is for me and you, if we are believers. Each age lasts for thousands of years, how many, only God knows. God forbid that we reach such a state that these cure are not effective, so that for .deserving and meriting the everlasting blessings [of heaven] this final cure is required

God forbid that it should be necessary

۱- 'Ayashi narrates from Humran who asked from Imam al-Baqir, peace be with him, about the ayah mentioned, and he answered: "This is about those who will depart .from the fire." Majma' al-Bayan, vol. ۱۰, p. ۴۲۴

that a man should go to hell for a while and burn there until he is purified from his vices, spiritual pollution and filthy satanic attributes, so that he may become deserving and capable of benefiting from

.(Gardens beneath which rivers flow" (Q ۵۸:۲۲"

Beware that this is only for those whose sins have not reached such an extent that they are entirely deprived of the mercy and blessings of God the Almighty, those who .yet have an essential merit for going to heaven

God forbid that a man, due to the multitude of his sins he should be expelled and blocked from the presence of God the Almighty, and that he should be bereft of the divine mercy, so that there is no other way for him to remain forever in the fire of hell. God forbid that you should be bereft of divine mercy and blessings, and that you should be subject to His wrath, anger and chastisements. May your deeds, behavior and speech not be the means to the denial of grace, so that there is no way for you .but eternal damnation

Now, while you cannot bear to keep a hot stone in your hand for a minute, keep the fire of hell away! Keep these fires from the seminaries and from the clerical community. Keep disputes and strife far from your hearts. Behave well with people, and in company, and be compassionate and kind. Of course, you are not to be nice to sinners with regard

.to their sins and rebelliousness

Tell him to his face of his ugly deeds and wrongdoing, and prohibit him from it, and keep yourselves from promoting anarchy and from rebellion. Behave well with the servants of God and the righteous. Show respect to the learned with regard to their knowledge, to those on the path of guidance with regard to their virtue, and to the .ignorant and unlearned, for they are also the servants of God

Have good behavior; be kind, honest and brotherly. Refine yourselves. You want to refine and guide the community, but how can one who is not able to reform and manage himself guide and manage others? Now there are only a few days left in the month of Sha'ban, so try in these few days to repent and reform yourselves, and .enter the blessed month of Ramadan with a healthy soul

Points regarding the Intimate Devotions (Munajat) of the Month of Sha'ban

Have you said the Munajat of Sha'ban for God, the Blessed and Supreme, during this month of Sha'ban in which it has been advised to recite this devotion from the first until the last month? Have you benefited from its lofty meanings which teach ?increased faith and knowledge [ma'rifat] with regard to the station of the Lord

It is reported with regard to this supplication that it is the munajat of Imam 'Ali, peace be with him and his descendants, and that all of the immaculate Imams, peace be with them, called upon Allah by this devotion. (۱) Very few supplications and devotions [du'a

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۱- Cf. Iqbal al-A'mal, Deeds for the Month of Sha'ban, p. ۶۸۵; Misbah al-Mutahajjid wa Salah al-Muta'bah, p. ۳۷۴; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۹۱, p. ۹۷-۹۹, "The Book of Dhikr and .Du'a", chap. ۳۲, hadith ۱۲

.wa munajat] may be found which were recited by all of the Imams ('a) for God

This devotion is truly an introduction to admonish and prepare man to accept the responsibilities of the blessed month of Ramadan, and it is possible that it is also to remind the aware person of the motive for fasting and its valuable fruits.

The immaculate Imams, peace be with them, have explained many things by the tongue of supplication. The tongue of supplication is very different from the other tongues by which those greats explained precepts. They have explained most spiritual, metaphysical, and precisely divine matters, and that which is related to knowledge of Allah by the tongue of supplication. But we recite supplications to the end and unfortunately pay no attention to their meanings, and we fail to understand what they really want to say.

In this munajat we read: "O my God! Grant that I may be perfectly cut off from all else but You, and enlighten the vision of our hearts by the radiance of vision toward You, until the visions of the heart tear through the curtains of light and attach to the Source of Greatness and our souls come to belong to Your Exalted Sanctity." (١)

It is possible that the meaning of the sentence, "O my God! Grant that I may be perfectly cut off from all else but You," is that prior to the blessed month of Ramadan, divinely aware people should get ready and prepare themselves for cutting themselves

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١- Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ١٩, part ٢, old edition, "bab al-ad'iyyah wal-munajat," pp. ٨٩-٩٠.

off and avoiding worldly pleasures (and this avoidance is that very being cut off perfectly from all else but Allah). Being perfectly cut off from all else is not something easily obtained.

It requires extra hard practice, going to some lengths, spiritual exercises, perseverance, and discipline, until one is able to fix one's attention completely on nothing but God and cut himself off from all else. If someone is able to do this, he has reached a great felicity. However, with the least attention to this world it is impossible to be cut off from all else but Allah.

Someone who wants to perform the fast of the blessed month of Ramadan with such manners as he has been asked to, must cut himself off completely from all else so that he can observe the manners for the celebration and feast [of Allah], coming to know of the station of the Host, insofar as this is possible.

According to the order of the Holy Apostle, peace be upon him and his progeny, (which is related in one of his sermons) all of the servants of God, the Supreme, have been invited by Him to a feast in the blessed month of Ramadan and are to be the guests of the Provider at His feast. He says there: "O you people! The month of Allah is approaching you...and you have been invited in it to the feast of Allah." (١)

In this few days until the blessed month of Ramadan, you should reflect,

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١- From Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ٧, p. ٢٢٧, 'The Book of Fasting, Chapter on the Month of Ramadan,' chap. ١٨, hadith ٢٠.

reform yourselves, and pay attention to God Almighty, seek forgiveness for your unbecoming behavior and deeds, and if, God forbid, you have committed a sin, repent for it prior to entering the blessed month of Ramadan. Habituate your tongue to .intimate devotions [munajat] to God the Almighty

God forbid that in the blessed month of Ramadan you should backbite or slander, or in short, sin, and so become polluted by transgression in the presence of the Lord, the Exalted, at His feast. You have been invited during this honorable month to the banquet of God the Almighty, "and you have been invited in it to the feast of Allah," so, .get yourself ready for the magnificent feast of the Almighty

At least respect the formal and exoteric manners of fasting. (The true manners of fasting are another matter entirely, and require constant care and effort.) The meaning of fasting is not merely refraining from eating and drinking, one must also keep oneself from sin. This is the primary etiquette of fasting for novices. (The etiquette of fasting for divine people who want to reach the mine of greatness is other (.than this

You should at least observe the primary etiquette of fasting, and in the same way that you refrain from eating and drinking, you should keep your eyes, ears and tongue from transgression. From now on, keep your tongue from backbiting, slander, speaking bad, and lies, and expel from your hearts all spite, envy, and other ugly satanic attributes. If

you are able, cut yourself off from all but Allah. Perform your deeds sincerely and .without duplicity

Cut yourselves off from the Satans among humans and the jinn, although we ourselves apparently cannot aspire to reaching such a valuable state of felicity. At least try to see to it that your fast is not accompanied by sin. Otherwise, even if your fast is correct from the point of view of Islamic law, it will not ascend to be accepted by God. There is a big difference between the ascension of one's works and their .acceptance on the one hand, and their religious correctness on the other

If, by the end of the blessed month of Ramadan, there is no change in your works and deeds, and your ways and manners are no different than they were before the month of fasting, it is evident that the fast which you were expected to perform was not .realized, and that which you have done is no more than a vulgar physical fast

In this noble month, in which you have been invited to the divine banquet, if you do not gain insight [ma'rifat] about God the Almighty nor insight into yourself, it means that you have not properly participated in the feast of Allah. You must not forget that in this blessed month, which is the 'month of Allah', in which the way of divine mercy is opened to the servants of God and the satans and devils, according to some reports, are

(locked in chains. (1)

If you are not able to reform and refine yourselves, and to manage and control your nafs al-ammarah [the commanding soul], (2) to subdue your selfish lusts and to cut off your relations and interests with this world and material things, then after the end of the month of fasting it will be difficult for you to be able to accomplish this. Therefore, take advantage of this opportunity before the magnificent grace of it vanishes, and .purify and reform yourselves

Get ready and prepare to perform the duties of the month of fasting. Let it not be that prior to the arrival of the month of Ramadan you are like one who is wound up by the hand of Satan so that in this single month when the satans are enchained you !automatically busy yourselves with sin and deeds opposed to the orders of Islam

Sometimes due to his distance from God and the great number of his sins, the rebellious and sinful man sinks so low into darkness and ignorance that he does not need Satan to tempt him, but he himself takes on the color of Satan. "Sibghatullah" (3) .is the opposite of the color of Satan

Someone who pursues selfish desires and who is obedient to Satan gradually turns the color of Satan. You should decide at least in this month to control yourselves and to avoid speech and behavior which displeases God, the Supreme. Right now in this very session make a covenant with

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It is reported from Jabir that Abu Ja'far, Imam al-Baqir, peace be with him, said: -۱ "The Prophet of Allah turned his face toward the people and said: 'O company of people! When the crescent moon of the month of Ramadan appears, the rebellious Satans are locked up, and the doors of heaven, the doors of paradise and the doors of mercy are opened, and the doors of the Fire are shut, and prayers are answered'." From Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۷, p. ۲۲۴, "The Book of Fasting," "The Section on the .Precepts of the Fast of the Month of Ramadan," section ۱۸, hadith ۱۴

The 'commanding soul/self' is an expression used in the Qur'an, associated with -۲

[.one’s base desires, cf. Q ١٢:٥٣. [Tr

Sibghatullah, the ‘color of Allah’, cf. Q ٢:١٣٨, is the opposite of the ‘color of Satan’. -٣
[.[Tr

God that during the blessed month of Ramadan you will avoid backbiting, slander and speaking ill of others.

Bring your tongue, eyes, hands, ears, and other organs and limbs under your control. Manage your deeds and your words. It is possible that this same worthy deed will result in God's paying attention to you and blessing you. After the month of fasting, when the satans are released from their chains, you will have been reformed, and you will no longer listen to the lies of Satan, and you will refine yourselves.

I repeat, decide during these thirty days of the blessed month of Ramadan to control your tongue, eyes, ears, and all your organs and limbs, and pay constant attention to the judgment of the shari'ah about the works you intend to do, and the words you intend to speak and the subject you intend to listen to. This is the elementary and outward manner of keeping a fast. At least keep to this outward manner of fasting!

If you observe that someone is about to backbite, prevent him and say to him that we have made a covenant that during these thirty days of Ramadan to keep ourselves from prohibited affairs. And if you are not able to keep him from backbiting, leave that session. Do not just sit there and listen. The Muslims must be safe from you.

Someone from whose hands, tongue and eyes other Muslims are not safe is not truly a Muslim, (١) although he may

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١- Abu Ja'far [Imam al-Baqir], peace be with him, said that the Apostle of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be with him and his progeny, said: "Shall I tell you of the believer? The believer is one whom the believers trust with their lives and their property. Shall I tell you of the Muslim? The Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands the Muslims are safe." From Usul al-Kafi, vol. ٣, p. ٣٣١, "The Book of Faith and Infidelity," "Chapter of the Believer, His signs and attributes," hadith ١٩.

be outwardly and formally a Muslim who has formally proclaimed: “La ilaha illallah” (There is no god but Allah). If, God forbid, you want to offend somebody, to slander them or to backbite, you should know that you are in the presence of the Lord; you .are to be the guest of God the Almighty, and in the presence of God

The Supreme, you would behave rudely to one of His servants, and to slander one of the servants of God is to slander God. They are the servants of God, especially if they are the scholars on the path of knowledge and piety [taqwa]. Sometimes you see that because of such affairs man reaches such a state that he denies God at the moment .of his death! He denies the divine signs

Then evil was the end of those who did evil, because they rejected the signs of Allah“ .(and used to mock them” (Q ۳۰:۱۰

These things occur gradually. Today, an incorrect view; tomorrow, a word of backbiting; and the next day, slander against a Muslim, and little by little these sins accumulate in the heart, and make the heart black and prevent man from attaining knowledge [ma‘rifat] of Allah, until it reaches the point that he denies everything and .rejects the truth

According to some ayah of the Qur’an as interpreted through some reports, the deeds of men will be presented to the Prophet (s) and the pure Imams (‘a) and will be (reviewed by them. (۱

When the Prophet reviews

For example: “And say: Work, so Allah will see your work and (so will) His Apostle - ۱ and the believers; and you shall be brought back to the Knower of the unseen and the seen, then He will inform you of what you did” (Q ۹:۱۰۵). Also, Abu Basir reported that Imam as-Sadiq (‘a) said: “The deeds will be reviewed by the Apostle of Allah, peace be with him and his progeny, the deeds of the servants, each morning, the good ones and the bad ones, so be careful. This is what Allah, the Supreme, said: ‘Work, so Allah

will see your work and (so will) His Apostle." Usul al-Kafi, vol. ۱, p. ۳۱۸, The Book of Hujjah, Chapter on the Presentation of the deeds to the Apostle and the Imams, peace be with them. Hadith ۱, ۲-۶. Tafsir Burhan, vol. ۲, p. ۱۵۷.

your deeds and he sees how many errors and sins there are, how upset and distressed will he be? You do not want the Apostle of God to become upset and distressed; you do not want to break his heart and make him sad.

When he witnesses that the page of your deeds is replete with backbiting, slander and speaking ill of other Muslims and that all your attention was devoted to this worldly and materialistic affairs and that your heart was overflowing with malice, hatred, spite, and suspicion towards each other, it is possible that in the presence of God, the Supreme and Holy, and the angels of Allah, he will be embarrassed that his community and followers were ungrateful for their divine blessings.

And thus unbridled and heedless they betrayed the trust of God, the Holy and Supreme. Someone who is related to us, even if in a menial position, if he errs, we become embarrassed. You are related to the Apostle of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be with him and his progeny; by entering the seminary, you have related yourself to the Law of Islam, the most Noble Apostle and the Noble Qur'an.

If you perform ugly deeds, it upsets the Prophet and he cannot bear it, and God forbid, you may be damned. Do not let the Apostle of Allah, peace be upon him and his progeny, and the pure Imams become upset and saddened. The heart of man is like a mirror, clear

and bright, and because of too much attention of this world and too many sins, it .becomes dark. However, if a person at least performs the fast for God

The Almighty, sincerely and without duplicity (I am not saying that other acts of worship are not to be pure; it is necessary for all of the acts of worship to be performed sincerely and without duplicity), then this worship which is a turning away from lust, putting aside pleasure, and cutting oneself off from all but God, if it is performed well in this single month, perhaps the grace of God will be extended to him .and the mirror of his heart will be cleaned of its blackness and tarnish

And there is hope that he will change his ways and become dissuaded from this wilderness and worldly pleasures. When the Night of Power [Laylat al-Qadr] (۱) arrives, one will gain the illumination which is obtained on that night by the friends of God and the believers. The reward of such a fast is God, as it has been reported: "The .fast is for me and I am its reward." (۲) Nothing else could be the reward of such a fast

A garden of blessings would not count as a worthy reward for such a fast. If a man takes fasting to mean closing his mouth to food but opening it for backbiting, and in the warm and friendly meetings with company in the nights when there is opportunity and time

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۱- The Night of Power is a night near the end of Ramadan in which the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet (s) and which, according the Qur'an is a night better than one [.thousand nights. Cf. Qur'an, Surah al-Qadr (Chapter ۹۷). [Tr

۲- Furu al-Kafi, vol. ۴, p. ۶۳, "The Book of Fasting," "The Chapter of the Grace of the Fast and the One who Keeps the Fast," hadith ۶

he engages in backbiting until sahar, (۱) such fasting will be of no benefit and have no effect. Rather, one who fasts in this way has not observed the etiquette of the .banquet of God

He has violated the rights of his Benefactor, the Benefactor who has provided him with all the means and conveniences of life before creating him, and has provided for the means of his development. He sent the prophets to guide him. He sent down the heavenly books. Man has been given the power to approach the source of greatness and the light of felicity, has been favored with intellect and perception, and has been .the recipient of His generosity

Now, He has invited His servants to enter His guest house and to sit at the table of His blessings where they are to thank and to praise Him to the extent that their tongues and hands are able. Is it right for the servants who benefit at the table of His blessings and who use the means and conveniences which He has freely provided for them that ?they should oppose their Master and Host and to rebel against Him

Is it right that they should use these things in opposition to Him against His wishes? Wouldn't this be biting the hand that feeds one and the height of ingratitude for man to sit at the table of his Master and with rude and impudent behavior and actions to audaciously insult his honored Host who is

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۱- Sahar is the period from the first light of the morning until sunrise. [Tr.]

?his benefactor, performing ugly and evil deeds before the Host

The guests must at least know who their Host is, and become aware of His dignity. They should be acquainted with the customs and manners of the sessions. They should try not to rebel by performing deeds which conflict with virtue and decorum. The guests of the Supreme Being must come to know the divine station of the .presence of the Lord of Majesty

A station of which the Imams, peace be with them, and the great divine prophets were constantly seeking greater knowledge and more perfect awareness, and wanted to obtain such a source of light and greatness. "And enlighten the eyes of our hearts with the light of the radiance of looking at you, until the vision of the hearts tears through the curtains of light and is then united with the source of greatness." ."The banquet of Allah is that very "source of greatness

God, the Blessed and Exalted, has invited His servants to enter the source of light and greatness. However, if the servant is not appropriate, he will not be able to enter into such a splendid and sumptuous position. God, the Exalted, has invited his servants to all sorts of favors and boons and to numerous spiritual pleasures, but if they are not .prepared to be present at such lofty positions, they will not be able to enter

How can one enter the presence of the Lord and the guest house of the Lord of

lords which is the source of greatness with spiritual pollution, vices, and sins of the body and soul? It requires merit. Preparation is necessary. In disgrace and with polluted hearts which are covered by veils of darkness, one will not be able to understand these spiritual meanings and truths. One must tear these veils and push aside these dark and light curtains which cover the heart and are barriers to union .with Allah so that one will be able to enter the brilliant and splendid divine company

The Veils of Man

Attention to other than God covers man with veils of darkness and light. If any worldly affair is a cause for man's attention to be directed toward the world and to neglect God, the Exalted, it raises dark veils. All of the corporeal worlds are dark veils. If the world is a means of directing attention to the Truth and for arriving at the abode of the Hereafter, which is the "abode of honor," then the dark veils are transformed into .veils of light

Being perfectly cut off from all else" means tearing and pushing aside all the dark and" light veils, until one is able to enter the divine guest house which is the "source of greatness." Hence, in this intimate devotion (munajat) there is a request to God, the Exalted, for vision and brightness of the heart so one may tear the veils of light and reach the source of greatness: "Until the vision of the heart tears through the veils

".of light, so that there is union with the source of greatness

However, one who has not yet torn the veils of darkness, one who directs all of his attention to the natural world and, God forbid, becomes deviated from Allah, and one who is basically unaware of the world beyond and the spiritual worlds, and has retrogressed to a state of nature, who has never decided to refine himself, to set into motion his spiritual powers, to push aside the curtains of darkness which are a cloud .over his heart

.He is lodged in 'the deepest of the depths' [of hell] which is the ultimate veil

,(Then we render him the lowest of the low" (Q ۹۵:۵"

.While the God of the worlds has created man in the most lofty state and station

.(Indeed we have created man in the best of molds" (Q ۹۵:۴"

If one follows the desires of the self and from the day he becomes acquainted with himself pays no attention to anything other than the dark wilderness(۱) and never thinks that it is possible that aside from this polluted dark world that there exists another place and station, then he will have sunk into the veil of darkness and have ,become an instance of

.(But he clung to the earth and followed his low desire" (Q ۷:۱۷۶"

With such a heart polluted by sin that he has been covered by the curtain of darkness, and with such a gloomy spirit that due to the effect numerous sins he

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۱- Imam uses the expression, 'alam-e zulumaneh-ye tabi'at, literally the dark world of nature, but here, by nature is not meant all things natural, as opposed to artificial, but [.unrefined and base. [Tr

has become far from God, the Exalted, that worship of desire and seeking after the world have blinded the intellect and eyes of truth, then he cannot be released from the veils of darkness, let alone to tear the veils of light and detach himself from all but .Allah

The strongest sort of belief he might have would be not to deny the position of the saints [awliya] of God, and not to consider as myths the worlds of the barzakh, the sirat, the resurrection, the accounting, the book, heaven, and hell. Due to the effects of sins and the attachment of the heart to this world, one comes to gradually deny these truths, to deny the positions of the saints [awliya] of God, positions which are .mentioned in not more than a few lines of prayers and intimate devotions

Knowledge and Faith

Sometimes you see that one has knowledge of these realities but has no faith. Undertakers are not afraid of the dead, for they have certainty that the dead cannot harm one, even when he was alive and had a spirit in his body he was not harmful, so what harm can he be now as an empty frame? However, those who are afraid of the dead are afraid because they do not have faith in this truth. They merely have .knowledge. They know about God and the Day of Atonement, but they lack certainty

The heart is unaware of that which the intellect has understood. They know the proofs

for the existence of God and the reality of the Resurrection, but these very same intellectual proofs may be veils covering the heart which do not permit the light of faith to shine in. Until God, the Exalted, frees them from the darkness and the obscurities and leads them to enter the worlds of light and radiances:

"Allah is the Guardian [wali] of those who believe; He brings them out of the darkness into the light" (Q ۲:۲۵۷).

He whose Guardian [wali] is God, the Blessed and Exalted, and who is taken by Him out from the darkness never commits another sin, never backbites, never slanders others, and he is never vengeful or envious of his brothers in faith. His own heart is filled with a feeling of luminosity and he no longer holds the world or what it contains in high esteem.

As Imam 'Ali (as) said, "If all the world and what it contains were offered to me to cruelly and unjustly take the skin of a grain of barley from the mouth of an ant, I would never accept it." (۱)

But some of you trample over everything, and you backbite the great [scholars] of Islam. If others speak ill of the grocers and perfume sellers on the street and backbite them, for your part some of you relate unfair things, insult and are impudent toward the scholars of Islam, because you are not firmly grounded in faith and you do not believe in [divine] retribution for your

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۱- "By Allah, if the seven climes and what is under their skies were offered to me to be sinful to Allah by taking the skin of a grain of barley from the ant, I would not do it." Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon ۲۱۵.

.own deeds

Impeccability [ismat] is nothing but perfect faith. The meaning of the impeccability of the prophets and the Friends of God [awliya] is not that, for instance, Gabriel took them by the hand. Of course, if Gabriel had taken the hand of Shimr, (۱) he would .never have committed a sin. However, impeccability is the offspring of faith

If a man had faith in God, the Exalted, and if he saw God Almighty with the eyes of his heart as one sees the sun, it would not be possible for him to commit a sin, just as if he .'were standing before an armed power, he would find some 'impeccability

This fear comes from committing sin. The Impeccable, [ma'sumin], peace be with them, after their creation from pure clay, because of the effects of their spiritual discipline, and acquisition of radiance and virtuous character traits, always see themselves as being in the presence of God, who knows all things and encompasses .all affairs

They have faith in the meaning of the words, "La ilaha illallah" [There is no god but Allah], and they believe that other than God, all persons and all things are perishing ,and have no role in determining man's destiny

.(All things are perishing but His Face" (Q۲۸:۸۸"

If man is certain and has faith that all the outward and inward worlds are in the presence of the Lord, and that God, the Exalted, is present everywhere and sees everything, in the presence of God and God's blessings there

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۱ – Shimr was the assassin of Imam Husayn, peace be with him, and symbolizes evil. [.[Tr

would be no possibility for committing sins. Man is not able to commit sins before a discerning child, and he does not expose his private parts; so how could he expose his ?private parts before God, the Exalted, and not dread to commit a crime

This is because he has faith in the presence of the child, however, with regard to the divine presence, if he has knowledge, he still lacks faith. Due to the multiplicity of his sins which have darkened and blackened his heart, he is totally unable to accept such .truths, and may not even consider them to be likely

Actually, man would not recklessly run wild if he considered it all likely, he need not have certainty, that which is reported in the Noble Qur'an is right, the promises and the threats, and that he should amend his ways and deeds. If you consider it all likely that ferocious beasts are to be found along the path which might harm you, or that there are armed bandits who might hold you up, you would refrain from taking that path, and you would try to ascertain the correctness or incorrectness of these .reports

Is it possible for someone to consider it possible that hell exists and that one may remain forever in its fire while at the same time doing wrong? Can it be said that one who considers God Almighty to be present and watching and Who sees himself to be ,in the presence of the Lord

p: ۶۶

and who considers it possible that there should be retribution for his words and deeds, a reckoning and chastisement, and that in this world every word he speaks, every step he takes, every deed he does, is recorded by angels of Allah called ‘Raqib and ‘Atid,’ (۱) and they carefully record all his words and deeds, and in such a state, ?could he fearless of his own doing

It is painful [to realize] that they do not even consider these truths to be possible. From the manners of some and their way of living it is obvious that they do not even consider the existence of a supernatural world to be possible, since the mere .consideration of this possibility keeps man from committing many wrongs

The First Step in Refinement

How long do you wish to remain in the sleep of negligence, plunged in corruption? Fear God! Beware of the aftermath of your deeds! Wake up from the sleep of negligence! You have not yet awakened. You have not yet taken the first step. The first step of wayfaring is yaqzah (awakening), but you are still asleep. Your eyes may .be open, but your hearts are asleep

If your hearts were not so sleepy and rusted and blackened with the effects of sin, you would not continue your wrongful deeds and words so carelessly and indifferently. If you thought a bit about the affairs of the other world and its terrible path you would give more importance to the heavy duties and responsibilities which

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۱- He utters not a word but there is by him a watcher at hand [raqibun ‘atidun]” (Q“ .(۵۰:۱۸

.rest upon your shoulders

There is also another world for you, there is also the resurrection. (You are not like other existents for which there is no returning.) Why do you not take warning? Why are you not awake and conscious? Why do you so heedlessly engage in backbiting and speaking ill of your Muslim brothers, or listening to such things? Do you not know that the tongue which wags in backbiting will be trampled under the feet of others on ?the day of resurrection

Have you heard that backbiting will be food for the dogs of hell? (١) Have you never given a thought to how evil are the consequences of these differences, enmities, jealousies, cynicism and selfishness, and arrogance and conceit? Do you know that repercussion of these wicked forbidden deeds is hell and that it is possible, God forbid, ?that they will lead to the everlasting fire

God does not want man to be afflicted with illnesses unaccompanied by pain, for when an illness is accompanied by pain, it forces man to seek a cure, to consult a doctor or go to hospital, but an unfelt illness without pain is more dangerous. By the time one becomes aware of it, it is too late. If mental illnesses were accompanied by pain, this would be something for which to be thankful. Ultimately, man would be .forced to find a cure or a remedy

But what can be done about such dangerous diseases for which there is no pain? The illnesses

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١ - In the advice given by the Commander of the Faithful [Imam 'Ali ('a)] to Nuf al-Bakali, it is stated: "Keep away from backbiting, for it will be food for the dogs of hell." Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ٨, p. ۶۰۰, The Book of Hajj, The Chapters on the Precepts of the .Ten, chap. ١۵٢, hadith ١۶

of arrogance and selfishness are without pain. Other sins corrupt the heart and the spirit without causing any pain. Not only are these illnesses unaccompanied by pain, but they also bring apparent pleasure. Meetings and sessions of backbiting are very warm and sweet! Love of the self and love of the world, which are the roots of all sins, (are pleasurable. (۱)

One who is afflicted with dropsy may die from water, but yet enjoy drinking it until his last breath. (۲) Naturally, if one gets pleasure from an illness, and it also has no pain, he will not seek any cure for it. However much he is warned that it is fatal, he will not believe it. If someone is afflicted with the illnesses of hedonism and worshipping the world, and his heart is filled with love of the world, he will grow weary of all else but the world and what is in it. Allah forbid, he will become an enemy of God, the servants .of God, the divine prophets and awliya, and the angels of Allah

He will have sense of hatred and loathing for them, and when the angels come at the command of the Glorious God to take his soul, he will have a feeling of repulsion and abhorrence, for he will see that God and the angels of Allah want to separate him .(from his beloved (the world and worldly things

It is possible that he will leave the world with hostility and enmity toward the

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۱- It is reported that Abi 'Abdillah (Imam Ja'far), peace be with him, said: The head of all sins is love of the world. Usul al-Kafi, vol. ۴, p. ۲, The Book of Faith and Infidelity, The Chapter on Love of the World and Avarice Toward It, hadith ۱; Usul al-Kafi, vol. ۳, p. ۱۹۷, The Book of Faith and Infidelity, The Chapter on Derogation of the World and Asceticism in It, hadith ۱۱; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۷۰, p. ۱ and vol. ۷۴, p. ۱۷۸.

۲- On the symptoms of dropsy is inordinate thirst. In Arabic the disease is called istisqa' and one who has the disease is mustasqa

Presence of the Exalted Truth (God). One of the great men of Qazvin [a province in the northwest of Tehran], may Allah have mercy on him, reported that he was present at the bedside of someone at the moment of his death. During the last instants of his life, he opened his eyes and said: "The oppression with which God has afflicted me, no one !has ever afflicted

Now, God wants to separate me from these children whom I have taken such pains to raise. Is there any greater oppression than this?" If one has not refined oneself, and has not averted oneself from the world, and has not expelled love of the world from his heart, there is the fear that he will die with a heart overflowing with anger and .hatred toward God and His awliya

He will have to contend with an ominous destiny. Is such an unbridled man to be ?considered as the crown of creation or as the most vile or creatures

By Time. Surely man is lost, except for he who believes and does good works, and" .(enjoin upon each other truth, and enjoin upon each other patience" (Q ۱۰۳:۱-۳

.In this surah, the only exceptions are the believers who perform good works

And good work is a work which is congruous with the spirit. However, you see that many of man's works are only congruent with the body. "Enjoining" is also not practiced. If you are dominated by love of the world and love

of the self, and if this prevents you from perceiving truths and realities, and prevents you from performing deed purely for God, and if you are kept from enjoining the truth and enjoining patience, and you are thereby obstructed from the way to guidance, .then you will be lost

You will be lost in this world and in the next, for you will have given up your youth and will be prohibited from the blessings of heaven and otherworldly advantages, and also lack this world. If others have no way to heaven, and if the doors to divine mercy are closed to them, if they are to abide eternally in the fire of hell, at least they will have ...had the world, they will have enjoyed worldly advantages, but you

Beware, lest love of the world and love of the self gradually increase within you, to the point that Satan is able to take away your faith. It is said that all of the efforts of Satan are for the sake of robbing faith. (۱) All of his efforts and labors, night and day, are for .the sake of taking away the faith of men

No one has given you a document to guarantee your faith. Perhaps one's faith is merely on loan [mustawda‘],(۲) and in the end Satan will get it, and you will leave this world with enmity for the Blessed and Exalted God and His awliya. Perhaps one will have enjoyed an entire life of divine blessings, provide

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He (Iblis) said: "As You have caused me to remain disappointed, I will certainly lie in -۱ wait for them in Your straight path" (Q ۷:۱۶). In the exegesis of 'Ali ibn Ibrahim pertaining to this ayah it is written: "If people tread the path of guidance, Satan tries to make them leave the path of religion." Tafsir of 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, vol. ۱, p. ۲۲۴; Tafsir .Burhan, vol. ۲, p. ۵

In a narration from the Family of the Prophet ('a) under ayah ۹۸, Surah al-An'am, -۲ pertaining to the phrase, "a resting place and a depository," it is said that the faiths of individuals may be divided into two kinds, fixed and borrowed. As in the narration from Muhammad ibn al-Fadil from Musa ibn al-Ja'far ('a) who said: "Faith which is in a resting place will be fixed until the Day of Resurrection. Faith which is in a depository

will be taken by God prior to death." Tafsir 'Ayashi, vol. ١, p. ۴٠١. In Nahj al-Balaghah it is also to be found that: "A kind of faith is fixed in the heart, and another kind is loaned in the hearts and breasts until the time of death." Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon ٢٣١.

for by Imam az-Zaman ('a) (١) and, God forbid, in the end one may give up his life .without faith and in enmity toward the Bestower of the Blessings

If you have any interest in, relation with and affection for, the world, try to cut it. This world, with all its superficial splendor and glitter is too insignificant to be worthy of love, especially for one who has divested himself of such superficialities of life. What do you have of this world that your heart should be attached to it? You have naught but the mosque, the prayer niche, the seminary, the corner of a room. Is it proper for ?you to compete for the mosque and the prayer niche

Should this be a cause of disagreement among you, to corrupt the society? Suppose that, like the worldly people, you had a comfortable sumptuous life, and that, God forbid, you spent your life on feasting and drinking. After your life is over, you would see that your life had passed like a pleasant dream, but the requital and liability for it .will be with you always

What values does this fleeting and apparently sweet life have (assuming that it is very sweet) in comparison to endless chastisement? The chastisement of worldly people is sometimes endless. The worldly people, who imagine that they have acquired the world and benefit from its advantages and boons, are remiss and mistaken. Everyone sees the world from the window of his own environment and situation, and imagines

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The phrase used is more literally, "sitting at the table of Imam az-Zaman ('a)," - ١ [.indicating that the religious students are provided for through religious donations. [Tr

.that the world is exactly that which he has

The physical world is broader than that which man imagines he has acquired, discovered and through which, he roams. It has been narrated about this world with all its means and ways that: "He has never looked kindly upon it." (١) So, how must the other world be upon which God, the Blessed and Exalted, has looked kindly? What is the source of greatness to which man is called and what is it like? Man is too low to .comprehend the source of greatness

If you purify your intentions, rectify your deeds, expel love of self and position from your hearts, a high station will be prepared for you. The whole world and what exists will be prepared for you. The whole world and what exists in it along with its superficial aspects is not worth even a cent by comparison to the station prepared for .the righteous servants of God. Try to achieve this lofty station

If you are able, try to make something of yourselves and improve yourselves so that you may pay no heed even to this lofty station. Do not worship God in order to reach this station but rather call upon Him and prostrate yourselves with your heads upon the earth before Him because He is worthy of worship and the Almighty. (٢) In that case you will have torn through curtains of light and have attained the source of .greatness

Can you obtain such a position

The full text of the hadith is: "For God, the Glorious and Exalted, the world is without -١ value; and among the creatures known to us which God has created, there is no existent more despicable to Him than the world, and since the time when He created the world, God has never looked kindly upon it." Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ٧٠, p. ١١٠, The Book of Faith and Infidelity, chap. ١٢٢, hadith ١٠٩

It is narrated from Imam as-Sadiq ('a): Worship is of three kinds: one group - ٢ worships God for fear; this is the worship of the servants. Another group worships God in order to obtain a reward; this is the worship of hirelings. And the third group

worships God, the Great and Lofty, because of love, and this is the worship of the free. And this is the most excellent worship." Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۱, p. ۴۵, The Chapters of Introduction to Worship, chap. ۹, hadith ۱; Usul al-Kafi, vol. ۳, p. ۱۳۱, The Book of Faith and Infidelity, Chapter on Worship, hadith ۵.

with these deeds and actions which you perform? Can this be reached by the path you tread? Is it easy to be saved from divine chastisement and to escape the terrible torment and the fire of hell? Do you imagine that the weeping of the Pure Imams and the cries of Imam Sajjad (‘a) were a teaching, and that they wanted to instruct others ?about how to cry

!With all this spirituality and the lofty position they hold, they wept for fear of God

They understood how difficult and dangerous it is to advance along the way before them. They were aware of the difficulties, hardships and problems of crossing the sirat, which has this world at one end and the next world at the other and which passes through hell. They were aware of the world of the grave, of the barzakh, and of the resurrection, and of their terrible torments, and hence they were never content .and always took refuge in God from the intense chastisement of the other world

What thought have you given to these terrible devastating torments, and what way have you found to salvation from them? When are you going to decide to reform and refine yourselves? Now, while you are young, have the strength of youth, you have .power over your faculties, and physical weaknesses have not yet overtaken you

If you do not think of refinement and of making something of yourselves, then how will you able to do it when you become old, when

your bodies and souls are in the grip of weakness and feebleness, and you have lost your will power, your decisiveness and your resistance, and when the burden of your sins has blackened your hearts? With every breath and every step you take, and with each passing moment of your life, reform becomes more difficult, and it is possible for .darkness and corruption to increase

The more one's age advances, the more the things which conflict with human felicity multiply and the more one's powers are weakened. Thus, when old age arrives, it is difficult to be successful at refinement and the acquisition of the virtues and piety (taqwa). One is unable to repent, for repentance is not merely the verbal expression, "I repent before Allah," rather, contrition and the resolve to abandon one's sin are (also necessary. (۱

Such contrition and resolve are not to be obtained by one who has engaged in backbiting and lying for fifty or seventy years, whose beard has become white with sin and transgression. Such a person is afflicted with sin to the end of his life. Youths should not sit still the dust of age turns them grey. (I have reached old age, and am aware of its misfortunes and difficulties). While you are young, you are able to .accomplish something

While you enjoy the strength and determination of youth you can expel selfish desires, worldly attractions and animal wants from yourselves. However, if you do not think about reform and making something

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It is narrated that Imam 'Ali ('a) said: "Verily, asking for forgiveness is a degree of -۱ the 'illiyin and it is a word that means six things. The first of them is regret for what has occurred. The second is the resolve not to return to that evil ever again..." Nahj al-Balaghah, p. ۱۲۸۱, Hikmat ۴۰۹. For more information refer to Forty Hadiths: An Exposition by Imam Khomeini, hadith ۱۷, translated by 'Ali Quli Qara'i in the journal, Al-Tawhid, vol. ۷, no. ۲, pp. ۳۹-۵۲. and on line at: http://www.al-islam.org/forty-hadith-an-exposition-second-edition-imam-k... [۱۳] Note that the 'illiyin are those of the most

[.lofty heights of heaven. Cf. Q ٨٣:١٧. [Tr

of yourselves while you are young, it will be too late when you become old. Think, while you are young, before you become old and exhausted. A young heart is subtle .and celestial, and within it the motivation for corruption is weak

However, the older one gets the stronger and more firm is the source of sin implanted in the heart, until it can no longer be uprooted, as it is reported. The heart of man is clear and shining like a mirror. With each sin a man commits, another black mark is added to the heart, until it becomes black, so that it is possible a night and day cannot pass without the commission of a sir against the Lord. (۱)۵۹

When old age arrives, it is difficult to return one's heart to its original form and state. If, God forbid, you have not reformed yourself when you leave the world, in what manner do you expect to meet God, when your heart is black and your eyes, ears and tongue are polluted by sins? How can you return that with which you have entrusted by God when it has become polluted and wicked, while it was given to you in perfect ?purity and cleanliness

These eyes and ears which are under your control, this hand and tongue which are at your command, these organs and limbs with which you live—all have been entrusted to you by God, the Almighty, and were given to you in perfect purity and .righteousness

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۱- It is reported from Imam al-Baqir ('a): "There is no servant without a white spot on his heart. When a sin is performed a black spot appears on it. Then if he repents, this blackness is erased. But if he continues to sin, the blackness increases, until it covers the white. When the white is covered, one with such a heart never returns to excellence and goodness. Usul al-Kafi, vol. ۳, p. ۲۷۴, The Book of Faith and Infidelity, .The Chapter on Sins, hadith ۲۰

If they are afflicted with sin, they become polluted. If, God forbid, they are polluted .with that which is forbidden, wickedness results

When the time comes to return this trust, it is possible that you will be asked if this is the right way to protect the trust which was given you. When the trust was placed under your control, was it like this? Was the heart which you were given like this? Were the eyes which were bestowed upon you like this? Were the other organs and limbs which were placed at your will this polluted and dirty? What will be your answer ?to these questions

How will you meet God when you have committed such treachery with regard to that with which you have been entrusted? You are young. You have spent your youth in such a way that from a worldly perspective you have given up many benefits. If you use this valuable time and the spring of your youth in the way of God and with a specific sacred purpose, then it has not been wasted, but rather this world and the .next have been determined for you

However, if your behavior is of such a manner as is currently witnessed, then you have wasted your youth and the prime of your life has been passed in vain. In the other world also, various severe difficulties, calamities and troubles will grab you by .the neck, and you will fall into the whirlpool of misfortunes and disaster

Another Warning

Your future is dark: numerous enemies are surrounding you on every side and from all strata; dangerous fiendish plans are ready to be enacted which will destroy you and the seminaries. The colonialists dream about what they will do with you; they have deep dream about what they will do with Islam and the Muslims. With the .pretense of Islam, they have drawn up dangerous plans for you

Only in the shade of refinement, preparation and the proper arrangement and order will you be able to push away these corruption and difficulties, and frustrate the plans of the colonialists. I am now living the last days of my life. Sooner or later I will leave you. But I see before me dark black days ahead for you. If you do not reform and prepare yourselves, and if you do not rule your studies and your lives with order and .discipline, then, God forbid, you will be doomed to annihilation

Before you lose the chance, before you fall into the hands of the enemy with regard to every religious and scholarly affair, think! Wake up! Arise! The first stage is to decide to refine and purify your souls and to reform yourselves. Prepare and organize yourselves. Establish some order and discipline in the seminaries. Do not let others .come to arrange [the affairs of] the seminaries

Do not let others take hold of the seminaries with the excuse that 'these people are not capable of it; it is not their

sort of work; they are just a group of loafers who have gathered in the seminaries,' and then in the name of organization and reform, to spoil the seminaries and take you under their own control. Do not give them an excuse. If you are organized and purified, and if in every respect you are well ordered and arranged others will not be able to aspire to control you.

There will then be no way to penetrate into the seminaries and the clerical society. Prepare and purify yourselves. Get ready to prevent the mischief with which you will be faced. Prepare your seminaries for resistance against the events which are to come. God forbid, black days lie ahead of you. The conditions are ripe for bad days to come. The colonialists want to destroy all aspects of Islam, and you must stand up against them.

With love of self and position, with arrogance and pride, you cannot mount any resistance. An evil scholar, a scholar who inclines toward the world, a scholar who thinks of preserving his position and administrative post, will not be able to combat the enemies of Islam. He will be more harmful than others. Take a step for the sake of God. Dispel the love of the world from your heart. Then you will be able to engage in combat.

From this moment on, develop and raise this point in your heart, that I must be an armed soldier of Islam, and sacrifice myself for Islam.

I must work for Islam until I am destroyed. Do not make excuse for yourself that today is inappropriate. Try to be useful for the future of Islam. In short, become a human being! The colonialists are afraid of human beings. They are afraid of man. The colonialists, who want to plunder all we have, will not allow the training of human beings in religious and scholarly universities.

They are afraid of man. If a man is found in a country, it bothers them, and endangers their interests. It is your duty to make something of yourselves, to become perfect men, and to stand up against the vicious plans of the enemies of Islam. If you are not organized and prepared, of you do not resist and combat the lashes which whip the body of Islam every day, not only will you yourselves be destroyed, but also the precepts and laws of Islam will be annihilated, and you will be responsible.

You 'ulama! You scholars! You Muslims! You will be responsible. First you 'ulama and seminary students and then the rest of the Muslims will be responsible: "All of you are shepherds and all of you are responsible for tending the flock." (١)

You young people must strengthen your wills so that you can stand up against every oppression and injustice. Other than this there is no alternative: your dignity, the dignity of Islam, and the dignity of the Islamic countries depend upon your resistance and opposition.

God Almighty! Protect Islam, the

١- Awali al-La'ali, vol. ١, p. ١٢٩, chap. ٨, hadith ٣. Al-Jami' as-Saghir, vol. ٢, p. ٩٥' ,۴۵.

Muslims and the Islamic countries from foreign evils. Cut the hands of the colonialists and traitors to Islam in the Islamic countries and in the seminaries. Grant success and help to the Islamic ‘ulama and to the great marja’(١) in their defense of the sacred laws of the Noble Qur’an and their advancement of the holy ideals of Islam. Make the clergy of Islam aware of their heavy duties and important responsibilities in the present epoch.

Protect and keep safe the seminaries and clerical centers from the thievery and influence of the enemies of Islam and the hands of the colonialists. Grant the success of making something of themselves and purifying and refining the soul to the young generation of clerics and university students and to the entire Muslim community.

Free the people of Islam from the sleep of negligence, from frailty, from apathy and inflexibility of thought, so that with the lustrous revolutionary teachings of the Qur’an they may come to themselves, rise up, and in the shade of unity and oneness they may cut the hands of the colonialists and of the inveterate enemies of Islam from the Islamic countries, and so that they may regain the freedom, independence, nobility, and greatness which they have lost.

“Our Lord, pour down upon us patience, and make our steps firm and assist us against the unbelieving people” (Q ٢:٢٥٠).

Selected Quotations

The whole world and what exists in it along with its superficial aspects is not worth even a cent by

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١- The maraji‘ at-taqlid are the sources of imitation for Islamic law. [Tr.]

.comparison to the station prepared for the righteous servants of God

This world, with all its superficial splendor and glitter is too insignificant to be worthy .of love

What values does this fleeting and apparently sweet life have (assuming that it is very ?sweet) in comparison to endless chastisement

.Attention to other than God covers man with veils of darkness and light

If any worldly affair is a cause for man's attention to be directed toward the world and .to neglect God, the Exalted, it raises dark veils

Be of the party of Allah; restrain yourselves from the splendor and glitter of life and .artificiality

A ruhani (clergyman) who considers himself a follower of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, peace be .with him, is not possibly tempted by the world

.The root of all these conflicts which have no specific sacred aims is love of this world

The prophets of God were raised in order to train the people, to develop humanity, and to remove them from ugliness, filth, corruption, pollution, moral turpitude, and to .acquaint them with virtue and good manners

If you take steps for the sake of God, God the Almighty is the turner of the hearts: He .will turn hearts in favor for you

.Except for the unique Creator pay attention to no one

The heart of man is like a mirror, clear and bright, and because of too much attention .of this world and too many sins, it becomes dark

How can one enter the presence of the Lord and the guest house of the Lord of lords

which is the source of greatness with spiritual pollution, vices, and sins of the body ?and soul

Fear God! Beware of the aftermath of your deeds! Wake up from the sleep of !negligence

Think a little, look ahead, weigh the consequences of yours deeds, keep in mind the perilous events which take place after death, the pressure of the grave, the world of barzakh (the period between death and resurrection), and do not neglect the .difficulties which will follow that

.Hell is lit with the ugly works and deeds of man

If a man does not light the fire by his works and deeds, hell will be extinguished. The .interior of this disposition is hell. To approach this disposition is to approach hell

That which occurs to this ‘alim in the next world is something which has been .prepared in this world

.Before loosing the opportunity, you should try to remedy this

.You young people are advancing toward old age, and we old people toward death

With every breath and every step you take, and with each passing moment of your life, reform becomes more difficult, and it is possible for darkness and corruption to .increase

While you enjoy the strength and determination of youth you can expel selfish .desires, worldly attractions and animal wants from yourselves

A young heart is subtle and celestial, and within it the motivation for corruption is weak. However, the older one gets the stronger and more firm is the source of sin .implanted in the heart, until it can no longer be uprooted

Repentance is

not merely the verbal expression, “I repent before Allah,” rather, contrition and the .resolve to abandon one’s sin are also necessary

.Behave well with people, and in company, and be compassionate and kind

.Behave well with the good and righteous servants of God

Someone from whose hands, tongue and eyes other Muslims are not safe is not truly .a Muslim

.To slander one of the servants of God is to slander God

Someone who pursues selfish desires and who is obedient to Satan gradually turns .the color of Satan

The people of the other world are pure and at peace with one another. Their hearts .are overflowing with the love of God and servitude to Him

.The love for the servants of God is the shadow of that very love for God

The noble Qur’an is a great divine trust. The ‘ulama and ruhaniyyun (clergy) are the .bearers of the divine trust

The responsibilities of the learned are very heavy; the ‘ulama have more duties than .other people

It is narrated that when the soul reaches the throat, there is no longer any chance for .repentance and in that state one’s repentance will not be accepted

If an ‘alim is deviant, it is possible that the community will become infected by .deviation

If an ‘alim is refined, and he observes the morality and manners of Islam, he will .refine and guide the community

.In a soul which is unrefined, knowledge is a dark cover

Knowledge is light, but in a black corrupt heart it spreads wide the skirts of darkness and blackness

A knowledge which

would draw man closer to God, in a worldly soul brings him far distant from the place .of the Almighty

Even the knowledge of divine unity (tawhid), if it is for anything other than God, it .becomes a cover of darkness

If man does not cast pollution from the core of his soul, not only will whatever studying and learning he does be of no benefit by itself, rather it will actually be .harmful

.It is a corrupt ‘alim who corrupt the worlds

.If, God forbid, you fail to study, then it is forbidden for you to remain in the seminary

Every step forward which you take in the acquisition of knowledge should be matched by a step taken to beat down the desires of the soul, to strengthen one’s spiritual .(powers, to acquire nobility of character, and to gain spirituality and piety (taqwa

If you do not have a pure intention of approaching God, these sciences will be of no .benefit at all

.Try to reform and refine yourselves before you enter among the people

You should refine yourselves, so that when you leave the seminary and become the leader of a people in a city or district, they may profit from you, take advice from you, .and reform themselves

If due to your actions, deeds and unfair behavior, one person looses his way and leaves Islam, you would be guilty of the greatest of the major sins

God forbid that before a person develops himself, that people should pay heed to him, that he should become a personality

.and have influence among the people, causing him to loose his soul

!Before you loose hold of the reins of your self, develop and reform yourself

Adorn yourselves with good traits, and remove your vices! Be sincere in your lessons !and discussions, so that you may approach God

.If one does not have good intentions, one will be kept far from the divine precincts

.Establish some order and discipline in the seminaries

With love of self and position, with arrogance and pride, you cannot mount any .resistance

An evil scholar, a scholar who inclines toward the world, a scholar who thinks of preserving his position and administrative post, will not be able to combat the .enemies of Islam

Take a step for the sake of God. Dispel the love of the world from your heart. Then .you will be able to engage in combat

(The Intimate Devotions of the Month of Sha‘ban (Al-Munajat Ash-Sha‘baniyyah

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

.My Lord, bestow Your blessings on Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad

,Hear my prayer when I pray to You

.And hear my call when I call to You

.Turn to me when I whisper to You my devotions

For I have fled to You

,And am standing before You

Imploring You in humility

.In hope of that which You have as my reward

You know what is in my soul

.And You are aware of my need

,You are acquainted with my mind

:And nothing of my returning and my destination is hidden from You

,Not that with which I intend to begin speaking

,Nor the request I would utter

And of the hopes I have for

.the hereafter

O my Lord! Whatever You have destined for me until the end of my life

,Concerning the secret and open aspects of my life

,It is in Your Hand and in the hand of none else

,My abundance and my deficiency

.My benefit and my harm

My God! If You deprive me

?Who will provide for me

And if You forsake me

?Who will help me

My God! I seek refuge in You from Your wrath

.And from the arrival of Your displeasure

,My God! I am unworthy of Your Mercy

.You are certainly worthy of generosity to me by the virtue of Your Graciousness

My God! It is as though I myself were standing before You

,And were in the shade of my trust in You

Then You said that of which You are worthy

.And You covered me with Your forgiveness

?My God! If you forgive me, then who is more suited for that than You

And if the moment of death has come near

But my deeds have not yet brought me near to You,

Then I make this confession of my sins to You my vehicle.

My God! I have recklessly failed to look after my soul,

So it is doomed if You do not forgive it.

My God! Your favor has been constant throughout the days of my life,

So do not cut off Your favor from me at the time of my death!

My God! How can I despair of Your watching well over me after my death,

When You have wrought nothing but beauty in my life?

My God! Do that of which You are worthy in my case

And

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bestow Your grace upon a sinner engulfed in his ignorance.

My God! You have concealed my sins in this world,

While I am in greater need of their concealment in the hereafter.

As You have not exposed my sins to any of Your righteous servants,

Do not disgrace me on the Day of Resurrection before everyone.

My God! Your generosity has inflated my hopes

And Your righteousness is better than my deeds.

My God! Delight me with Your encounter on the day You judge among Your servants.

My God! My apology to You is the apology of one who cannot afford

That his apology not be accepted.

So, accept my apology, O most Generous of those to whom the evil doers offer their apologies!

My God! Do not reject my need,

Do not disappoint me in what I covet,

And do not cut off my hopes and aspirations from You.

My God! If You had wanted to degrade me,

You would not have guided me;

If You had wanted to disgrace me,

You would not have kept me safe and sound.

My God! I do not think You will refuse me in this need

In whose solicitation from You I have spent my life.

My God! To you is due all praise,

Always and forever, eternally,

Increasing, not diminishing,

As You like and please.

My God! If You hold me for my crimes,

I will hold on to You for Your forgiveness,

And if You hold me for my sins,

I will hold on to You for Your pardon.

If You cast me into the Fire,

I will announce to its inmates that I love You.

My God! If my

,works are too little regarding obedience to You

.There is indeed much regarding my hopes in You and my aspirations

,My God! How can I turn away from nigh unto You bereft, in failure

When I had such a good opinion of Your generosity that You would turn me away .from being bereft of salvation

My God! I have wasted my life on the evil of inattentiveness toward You

.And I have worn out my youth in the drunkenness of estranging myself from You

My God! I did not awaken when I was under a delusion about You

.And was inclined toward the way of Your wrath

,My God! I am Your servant, the son of Your servant, standing before You

.Trying to use Your own magnanimity as a means to You

My God! I am a servant who would

Excuse himself before You of that which I did in front

Of You because I lacked shame of being

,Watched by You; and I seek Your forgiveness

.For Forgiveness is a characteristic of Your generosity

My God! I was not strong enough to remove myself from disobedience to You

.Until You awakened me to Your love

I was as You wanted me to be

So I thank You for bringing me to

Your generosity and for purifying my heart

.Of the filth of negligence of You

My God! Look upon me as one

,Whom You called and who answered You

Whom You helped by employing him

.And who obeyed You

!O Near One who is not far from one who is estranged

O Generous One who does not withhold

!His reward from one who hopes for it

My

God! Provide me with a heart, the passion of which may bring it near to You;

With a tongue, the truth of which may be offered up to You;

And with a vision whose character may bring it nigh to You;

My God! Whoever becomes acquainted with You is not an unknown;

Whoever takes shelter with You is not abandoned;

One to whom You turn cannot be owned.

My God! Whoever takes the path to You is enlightened,

And whoever resorts to You is saved.

And I have cleaved to You, O my God!

So, do not disappoint me of Your Mercy,

And do not block me from Your kindness.

My God! Place me among your Friends

In the position of one who hopes for an increase in Your love.

My God! Inspire me with fervor for the remembrance of You until I have become inspired with remembrance of You

And spiritual zeal for the success of

Your Name and the station of Your Sanctity.

My God! By You I invoke You

To join me to the place of those who are obedient to You

And the abode of the righteous of those with whom You are pleased.

I can neither defend myself

.Nor control that which is in my interests

My God! I am Your weak and sinful servant

And Your repentant slave

So, do not make me one of those from whom You avert Your Face

.And whose inattentiveness blocks him from your forgiveness

My God! Make me completely cut off from all else but You

And enlighten the vision of our hearts

With the radiance of looking at You

Until the vision of our hearts

penetrates the veils of light

And reaches the Source of Grandeur

.And set our spirits to be suspended by the glory of your sanctity

,My God! Make me of those who answer you when you call them

,Who are thunderstruck by Your Majesty when you look at them

.And who work for you openly when you whisper to them secretly

My God! I have not allowed my good

,Opinion of You to be overcome by despair

.Nor have I lost hope in the favor of your generosity

My God! If my mistakes have

Degraded me with you, ignore them

.In virtue of my reliance on you

,My God! If my sins have lowered me to unworthiness of your kindness

.My certainty has roused me to the nobility of your affection

My God! If I have been put to sleep

,By neglecting to prepare to encounter you

.I have been roused by knowledge of the nobility of your blessings

,My God! If Your great punishment invites me to the Fire

.Your abundant reward invites me to heaven

,My God! I ask and beseech you

I implore and entrust You

,To bestow your blessings on Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad

,And to make me of those who are constant in their remembrance of you

,And who never violate their covenant with you

Who neglect giving thanks to You

.And who do not depreciate your commands

,My God! Join me to the Light of Your resplendent Might

So I may have gnosis of You

,And may be diverted from all else but you

.And be fearfully watchful of you

!O Sublime and Noble

,May the blessings of Allah be with Muhammad, His Apostle

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:and his immaculate progeny, abundant salutations prayed for their peace

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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Introduction of the Center – Ghaemiyeh Digital Library